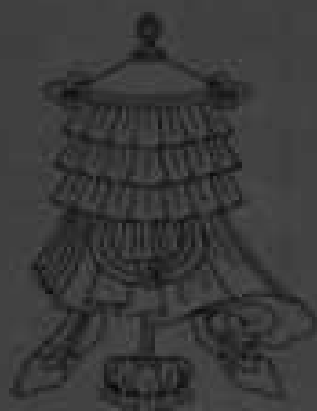
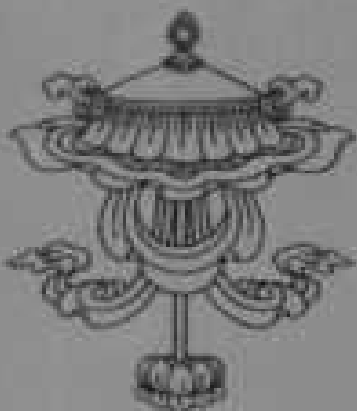
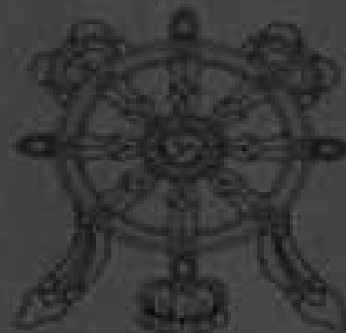




The Philosophical View of the Great Perfection in the Tibetan Bon Religion



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**THE PHILOSOPHICAL VIEW
OF THE GREAT PERFECTION
IN THE TIBETAN BON RELIGION**

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by

Donatella Rossi

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To my family

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ABBREVIATIONS

abbr.	abbreviated.
AJ	<i>Acta Jutlandica.</i>
AM	<i>Asia Major.</i>
AO	<i>Acta Orientalia.</i>
AOH	<i>Acta Orientalia Hungarica.</i>
AS	<i>Asiatische Studien.</i>
b.	born.
BEFEO	<i>Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient.</i>
BGTC	<i>Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo, Beijing, 1993.</i>
BIHP	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of History and Philology.</i>
BKSR	<i>Bonpo bKa' 'gyur Second Reprint.</i>
BSOAS	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies.</i>
Chin.	Chinese.
ed.	editor, edited.
EFEO	<i>École Française d'Extrême-Orient.</i>
EW	<i>East and West.</i>
HJAS	<i>Harvard Journal of Asian Studies.</i>
HR	<i>History of Religions.</i>
IJ	<i>Indo-Iranian Journal.</i>
IsMEO	<i>Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente.</i>
JA	<i>Journal Asiatique.</i>
JIABS	<i>Journal of the International Association for Buddhist Studies.</i>
JASB	<i>Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.</i>
JRAS	<i>Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.</i>
Lit.	Literally.
LTWA	<i>Library of Tibetan Works and Archives.</i>

MVy	<i>Mahāvvyutpatti</i> , Sasaki, Tokyo, 1916-1926.
MRDTB	<i>Memoirs of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko</i> .
MS	<i>Monumenta Serica</i> .
n.d.	not datable.
OE	<i>Oriens Extremus</i> .
RASB	<i>Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal</i> .
SCEAR	<i>Studies in Central and East Asian Religions</i> .
Skr.	Sanskrit.
SOAS	<i>School of Oriental and African Studies</i> .
SOR	<i>Serie Orientale Roma</i> .
SPS	<i>Śatapitaka Series</i> .
TBMC	Tibetan Bonpo Monastic Centre.
TJ	<i>Tibet Journal</i> .
TP	<i>T'oung Pao</i> .
TR	<i>Tibetan Review</i> .

Concerning the notes: For the sake of convenience, notes have been placed at the foot of the page. In the introductory section, the length of some notes prevents them from appearing on the page on which they were cited; however, the reader can find them on the immediately adjoining page.

Part One:

INTRODUCTION

PRELIMINARY REMARKS ON THE BON RELIGION AND ON THE TEACHINGS OF THE GREAT PERFECTION

The Bon Religion

The objective of this work is to offer a descriptive analysis of the philosophical view (Ita ha) of the Great Perfection (rDzogs pa chen po, or in short rDzogs chen) with particular reference to the Bon religion.'

Followers of the Bon religion maintain that its tenets were first expounded as the 'Everlasting Bon' (g.yung drung Bon)' by the Teacher (stop pa) gShen rab Mi bo che, who is considered to have made his appearance on earth much earlier than the Buddha Sakyamuni,; and was born in and ruled a country to the West of Tibet known as sTag gzig (or rTag gzig).;

After sTon pa gShen rab entrusted his teachings to worthy successors, the Everlasting Bon is believed to have spread from that country toward the East, reaching India, China, the kingdom of Zhang Zhung and from there Tibet.' The kingdom of Zhang Zhung played an influential role in the history and culture of Tibet. With Mount Kailash (Ti se) at its centre,' it seems to have covered a vast area to the west and possibly north-east of Tibet.' It was divided into three provinces (sgo plug bargsum) where different languages were spoken;' one of these, smar (or smrar),^o was the language from which numerous texts, including those of the Great Perfection, are said to have been translated into Tibetan. Marriage alliances were established between the royal families of Zhang Zhung and Tibet. Zhang Zhung priests and masters were invited to Tibet to offer their wisdom and their supernatural skills. Eventually, around the seventh/eighth centuries A.D., the kingdom of Zhang Zhung was conquered and annexed to the then expanding Tibetan empire.'"

Bon enjoyed royal patronage in Tibet until the second half of the eighth century A.D., when Buddhism was adopted as the official creed. Bon lost its

recognition and support at the highest level and its followers, particularly within the established religious elite, had no choice but to convert or go into exile. Bonpo texts were hidden so that they could be retrieved and revealed later, at more favourable times."

The period following the disintegration of the Tibetan empire (which occurred during the first half of the ninth century) saw a general revival of Buddhism and the gradual rise of doctrinal and philosophical Buddhist tendencies that led to the creation of the well-known schools of Tibetan Buddhism.¹² Bonpos, on their part, did not remain indifferent to that state of affairs, and adapting to the trend of the time, proceeded toward the systematization of their own religion and to the canonization of their scriptures.¹³

This process of adaptation and systematization could not have possibly taken place without interaction with, or inspiration drawn from, the doctrinal milieux that were gradually taking shape. Although it is difficult for us to believe that this process was simply a unilateral one, it thus happened that later Tibetan Buddhist polemics took a very negative stand against the Bonpos, which contributed to the creation of an image of Bon as a decadent unorthodox sect that had plagiarized most of the Buddhist tenets.' This image influenced the approach of Western scholarship toward the study of this religion, which for many years remained subject to disdain or biased suspicion.¹⁵ There are unquestionably quite a few aspects of the Bon religion, as it appears today, which do not differ from 'orthodox' Buddhist ones. In this respect Per Kv erne has rightly observed:'

In view of the manifest similarities between Bon and Buddhism, one may well ask in what the distinction between the two religions consists. The answer, at least to this author, would seem to depend on which perspective is adopted when describing Bon. Rituals and other religious practices, as well as meditational and metaphysical traditions are, undeniably, to a large extent similar, even identical. Concepts of sacred history and sources of religious authority are, however, radically different and justify the claim of the Bon pos to constitute an entirely distinct religious community.

In our opinion, it is precisely the value of such concepts and sources that makes Bon not only a fascinating religious phenomenon, but also, if not more importantly, one of the most precious assets of the Tibetan cultural heritage.'

Nowadays several thousand Tibetans profess the Bon religion. Bonpos are

found in various districts of Western, Central, and Eastern Tibet, and in the Dolpo area of Nepal. Since 1968 a Bonpo lay and monastic settlement has been established by Tibetan refugees in India at Dolanji (Himachal Pradesh)?

The Teachings of the Great Perfection

Traditionally speaking, the Great Perfection represents the state of absolute knowledge that is said to exist as a potentiality in all sentient beings. It is also considered to be the essential nature of all phenomena. Teachings that deal with the Great Perfection are esoteric in character. For this reason, they are imparted by teachers who have mastered their meaning only to individuals who are deemed to possess an exceptional capacity of understanding. They provide such individuals with the theoretical and technical means to actualize that absolute state of knowledge within themselves.

For the Bonpos the teachings of the Great Perfection are the epitome of all the beliefs classified in their Nine Vehicles (theg pa rim dgu).¹⁹ The same applies to the rNying ma pas, the followers of the Old School of Tibetan Buddhism,²⁰ although they have also been practised by representatives of other Tibetan Buddhist traditions.²¹

A study of the history and doctrines of the Great Perfection is therefore significant not only in its own right, but also for the understanding of the evolution of Indo-Tibetan Buddhism in general and of the Bon religion in particular.²²

The historical origins of the Great Perfection cannot be fixed with absolute certainty. Its tenets seem to have taken shape at least around the ninth century A.D.²³ In this respect they can be considered as forerunning the whole evolution and configuration of Tibetan Buddhism. The doctrines of the Great Perfection seem to retain theoretical elements that can be historically traced within the evolution of the higher categories of Tautras such as Mahayoga,²⁴ but they also seem to have been inspired by much earlier philosophical principles.

Although it may be a truism, we do not think that doctrines or spiritual movements originated ex niltilo or without regard for actual historical circumstances, be that in the East or in the West. The 'mystery quest' is as old as the human race." The history of religions testifies to the intensity and significance of this quest, which has naturally drawn from beliefs that had already been elaborated at a certain time in history, and which were taken as the basis for further investigation and contemplation.

This quest has certainly been influenced by concrete circumstances. However,

since human beings are characterized by a high degree of mobility and adaptability, as well as by curiosity (if not by an overwhelming wish for knowledge), when it comes to addressing questions as vital as one's spiritual salvation or liberation from suffering, a straight line is sometimes very difficult to discover. It is therefore not surprising that similar ideas may have arisen at thousands of kilometers of distance; or that they may have tapped from one another, while concentrating more on the content, rather than the container. For, as an anonymous European mystic put it:

A thousand miles would you run to speak with another who you knew really felt it, and yet when you got there, find yourself speechless. 2

As far as the Old School (rNying ma) is concerned, it is maintained that these doctrines were first propounded by dGa' rab rDo rje, a son miraculously born to the virgin Princess-Bhiksuni of Uddiyana, Sudharma.^{2x} They were subsequently introduced in Tibet from India during the eighth century by the master Vimalamitra.²⁹ Then, through the intervention of the great master Padmasambhava, who is traditionally considered as the spiritual 'founder' of the Old School,³⁰ they were entrusted to his disciple Vairocana, who thus became the first lineage holder of the Great Perfection in Tibet.³¹ Vairocana reportedly carried out translations into Tibetan of Bonpo works.³² Moreover, he is said to have hidden some Bonpo texts of the 'Mind Class' (sems phyogs, i.e., rdz(g)s Chen) before his forced departure from Central Tibet.³³

It is not uncommon that certain spiritual beliefs may appear as doctrinally inadequate and become unacceptable to the leading forces of a given moment; that is even more so when those spiritual and temporal forces cooperate with each other, as has been the case for Tibet.⁻⁴ It has thus happened that both the Great Perfection and the Bon religion as a whole have been no exception to that rule.³⁵ To give just one example, sPyan snga ba Blo gros rGyal mtshan (1390-1448),³⁶ a contemporary of Tsong kha pa, did not hesitate in his small treatise about the classification of the rNying ma pas and the Bonpos³⁷ to dismiss their rDzogs chen doctrines and related works as carelessly conceived and deceptive,-
"being nothing else, in the case of the rNying ma pas, but the outcome of infamous ideas and banned practices expounded in the Mahayoga Tantras, particularly the gSang ba snying po (Skt.

Gtihyagarhlta);³⁴ and in the case of the Bonpos, a self-fabricated system stolen from teachers whose theories had 'officially' been rejected since the time of King

Khri srong lDe btsan (b. 742), such as those of Hwa shang (Chin. he sltang, lit. monk) Mahayana.;"

THE BONPO GREAT PERFECTION LINEAGES AND THEIR TEXTUAL SOURCES

There are three main systems of transmission related to the teachings of the rDzogs pa chen po in the Bon religion. They are known as A Khrid, rDzogs then and sNt,'aii rgyud.

The teachings of the A khrid-instructions on the absolute state of knowledge symbolized by the letter A-were promulgated by the eleventh-century master rMe'u dGongs mdzod Ri khrod Chen po (1038-1096). They form a full meditative training originally consisting of eighty practice-sessions (A khrid tlnni nitshams brgyad cu pa) lasting two weeks each, which were later reduced to thirty by 'A zha Blo Bros rGyal mtshan (1198-1263) and finally to fifteen by Bru Chen (or Bru sgom) rGyal ba g.Yung drung (1242-1290), whereby they eventually became known as the A Klirid thus mtslimns bco higa.⁴

The system called rDzogs chen is based on a textual cycle known as the rDzogs pa Chen po yang rtse klong cheii,⁴² which is related to another set of teaching traditionally ascribed to the earlier propagation of the doctrine (snga dear), i.e., that preceding the abolishment of Bon during the eighth century by King Khri srong lDe btsan.

This set of teachings is called the Three Proclamations, bsGrags pa skor ,gsum, because they were proclaimed in the realms of deities (lha), subterranean beings (klu) and humans (rni) by 'Chi med gTsug phud, an emanation of the deity gShen lha 'Od dkar." They are considered to have been introduced in Zhang Zhung, from sTag gzig, by the master and scholar sNya chen Li shu sTag ring' sNya chen Li shu sTag ring is said to have brought these teachings to Tibet during the eighth century and to have subsequently concealed them at the time of the persecution of Bon carried out during the reign of King Khri srong lDe btsan." Both cycles were discovered by gZhod ston dNgos grub Grags pa, who is considered an incarnation of Li shu sTag ring.' He is said to have found them in the statue of Vairocana in the temple of Khom mthing in lHo brag.⁴⁷

The rDzogs chen yang rtse klong clten cycle is concerned with expounding

the Great Perfection tenets through epistemological and pragmatical means, while that of the Three Proclamations mainly deals with [the theoretical aspects of the doctrine. Each Proclamation is divided into three parts styled rgyud \(tantric teachings\), lung \(precepts\) and man ngag \(essential instructions\).](#)"

[The third system is that of the Aural Lineage of Zhang Zhung \(zhang zhung snyan rgyud\). According to this system, the teachings of the Great Perfection originating from the Primordial Teacher \(ye nyid kyi stop pa\) Kun to bZang po were mentally transmitted \(dgongs rgyud\) to 'the Nine Well-gone Ones' \(bder gshegs dgu\) and successively received by 'the Twenty-four Individuals' \(gang zag nyi shu rtsa bzhi\) of the kingdom of Zhang Zhung. Starting from the last of these twenty-four masters, Gyer spung sNang bzher sLod po \(eighth century\)," these teachings are said to have enjoyed uninterrupted single transmission \(gcig rgyud\) in Tibet at least until the time of sPa stop bsTan rgyal bZang po, who authored a compilation of the biographical accounts of the teachers of the Zhang Zhung Aural Transmission known as the rDzogs pa chen po zhang zhung snyan rgyud kyi brgyud pa'i bla ma'i rnam Char, The Biographies of the Lineage Teachers of the Zhang Zhung Aural Transmission of the Great Perfection.⁵⁰ An account of the lineages is found in the History and Doctrines of Bon po Nispanna Yoga." The text relates that until the time of Gyer spungs the teachings of the Great Perfection were not shown in the form of letters but were aurally transmitted through words;⁵² they were not suppressed, and therefore were not hidden as textual treasures.⁵³ According to Bonpo traditional accounts, through his magical powers Gyer spungs sNang bzher sLod po was instrumental in negotiating the preservation of Bonpo texts from Zhang Zhung when King Khri srong De btsan invaded that country.'; The cycle of the Zhang Zhung Aural transmission is considered to be very old, if not the oldest, in terms of Great Perfection teachings in the Bon religion. As to its written form, it doesn't seem to predate the eighth century, if we are to accept the traditional dates for Gyer spungs sNang bzher sLod po and the accounts contained in the Biographies of the Lineage Teachers by sPa ston bsTan rgyal bZang po.'s](#)

[The cycle is organized into four sections, each dealing with a particular aspect of the teachings transmitted by the master Ta pi Hri tsa to Gyer spungs. The first section is the external one, expounding the philosophical view of the Great Perfection \(pliyi Ita ba spyi gcod\).^{5h} The second section is the internal one and contains essential instructions for the practice \(rang mini ngag dinar khrid\). The third section is the secret one, consisting of meditational instructions involving 'pure awareness' \(gsang ba rig pa gcer mthong\). The fourth one is the very secret](#)

section, and is focused on teachings meant to disclose the Way of Being of the Ultimate Nature'? (hang gsang gnas lugs plug gcod)."

Although not strictly pertaining to the three transmission lineages of the Great Perfection, we have to mention two other important cycles of teachings: the first is that of the Ye khri nttha'sel, also known as the Indian cycle (rgya gargyi skor). This is considered to be the work of the eighth-century Zhang Zhung master Dran pa Nam mkha'.⁵⁹ These teachings were subsequently transmitted in the eleventh century by a miraculous apparition of Tshe dbang Rig 'dzin, the son of Dran pa Nam mkha', to Lung Bon (or Lung sgom) lHa gnyan (1088-1124 or 1112-1148).⁶⁰

The second one is that of the Byang chub sems gab pa dgu skor, which belongs to a series of textual discoveries classified as Southern Treasure (lHo gter). The text was found at 'Bri mtshams mtha' dkar in 1017 by gShen chen Klu dga' (996-1035). The latter is traditionally considered as the paramount protagonist of the later diffusion (phyi dar) of Bonpo doctrines, which was mainly carried out by means of textual discoveries.' The Byang chub sems gab pa dgu skor belongs to the Peaceful State cycle (zhi ba'i don skor) of the sPyi spungs Tantras Fz and it is considered as a fundamental text of the Bonpo Great Perfection," although it still remains inedited, as do most of the above-mentioned works.

Treasure texts are very important in the Bonpo as well as the rNying ma traditions." Reasons for hiding texts could depend on various circumstances: the time for transmission of certain teachings may not be favourable; the spiritual conditions of the recipients may not be developed enough; the teachings and their propounders encounter the opposition of political forces. In the case of Bon, it is traditionally maintained that two persecutions have taken place, one at the time of King Gri Gum, and one during the reign of King Khri srong lDe bstan.⁶⁷ Some teachings are hidden so that they may be practised in the future and bring spiritual benefit, or also to insure that no corruption takes place after their first promulgation, so that they may preserve their authenticity. Treasure texts can be hidden in natural places (sa gter) and even in the mind of realized teachers (dgongs gter).⁶⁶

The value attributed to textual treasures by the Bon religion is clearly reflected in their being included in the Bonpo Canon, which was systematized around the fifteenth century.^{h7} According to the nature of their content, they are grouped

under the four canonical sections (sde) of nrpo, 'Burn, rGyud and nnD:od. The last section contains the teachings of the Great Perfection!' This fourfold division is said to have been established by the Teacher gShen rab Mi bo the at the end of his worldly existence." It comprises the primary teachings and precepts belonging to the "Four Portals and the Treasury Counting as Fifth" (sgo bzlti mdzod Inga),⁷⁰ to the Nine Vehicles, and all the secondary ones .⁷¹

WESTERN WORKS ON THE GREAT PERFECTION IN THE BON RELIGION

[The Great Perfection in the Old School has been the object of an important study carried out by Samten G. Karmay.⁷² His scholarly work elucidates the matter in a very extensive and detailed fashion, both from an historical and a doctrinal viewpoint, and indeed represents a fundamental contribution towards the understanding of this Tibetan tradition. Quite a number of other scholarly studies dealing with the rDzogs pa chen po in the rNying ma tradition-as well as publications by contemporary Tibetan teachers and Western individuals that are to be considered as more practice-oriented-have come to light during the past twenty years.; On the contrary, research works about the Great Perfection in the Bon religion are to date very limited.'](#)

In 1967, with the valuable assistance of the Bonpo master Lopon Tenzin Namdak (sLob dpon bsTan 'dzin rNam dag, b. 1926), David L. Snellgrove published *The Nine Ways of Bon*, which contains translated and edited excerpts from the 'Dns pa rin po cbe dri ma med pa ,g:i brjid rab hi 'bar ha'i mdo, "The Precious Compendium, the Immaculate and Glorious Blazing Sutra", in short referred to as "The Glorious" (~Zi brjid).¹ [This is the long-version biography of the teacher gShen rab Mi bo che, the expounder of the Everlasting Bon \(g.yung drung Bon \).⁷¹ The Nine Ways of Bon represented the very first conscious attempt carried out in the West to let followers of the Bon religion speak for themselves. The work takes us through the Bonpo cosmological and doctrinal views that form the basis of the Nine Vehicles \(theg pa rim dgu\), the last of which is 'The Unsurpassable Supreme One' \(yang rise bla nted kyi theg pa\), namely the one that deals with rDzogs then."](#) Through the relevant excerpts, we thus get an impression of what rDzogs then for the Bonpos is about.

[The first scholarly study strictly dealing with the Great Perfection in the Bon religion was undertaken by Per Kvaerne in 1973, "Bonpo Studies, the A Khrid System of Meditation", \(Part One, Kailash, vol. I, no. 1, pp. 19-50 and Part Two, "The Essential Teachings of the A Khrid System", Kailash, vol. I, no. 4, pp. 248-332\).⁷⁸ By analyzing this system, P. Kvarne has provided precise and thorough historical and doctrinal references about one of the three main Bonpo systems](#)

[and lineages of the rDzogs pa chen po, and has clarified how this system developed within an interactive environment that involved both Bonpo and rNying ina pa teachers.](#)⁷⁹

[In 1990 Giaeomella Orofino published Sacred Teachings on Death and Liberation R0 a revised version of a research originally published in Italian,](#) which includes an annotated and commented translation of two interesting excerpts, namely the sixth chapter of the sGron ma drug gi g>danis pa and parts of the 'Chi rtags gsal ba'i sgron ma. These excerpts contain spiritual precepts, the description of signs and psycho-physical experiences, ransom rituals and releasing methods related to death and the intermediate state after death (bar do), presented from the Great Perfection perspective of the Aural (snyan) and rD:ogs chen transmissions.

[In 1992 Jean-Luc Achard carried out an interesting monographic research about the practice of thod real" and its related teachings entitled Le Pic des Visions: Etude stir deux techniques conteinplatives de la Grande Perfection daps les traditions rNying-ma-pa et Bon-po."](#) The work contains extensive translations and analyses of Bonpo textual material related but not limited to that esoteric practice.

[Recently Anne Klein and the Bonpo Geshe Tenzin Wangyal \(dGe hshes bsTan 'dzin dBang rgyal\) have undertaken a study and carried out a full translation of the gTan tshigs gal mdo rig pa'i tshad ma, a work attributed to the eighth century master sNya chen Li shu sTag ring. The work in question was discovered, among other Bonpo texts, by the three Buddhists of gTsang, Sum pa dBang tshul \(alias Sum pa BBang chub\), 'Bre Tshul seng and gCer bu dBang phyug, at lHa sa g.yer pa, some time during the fifth rah byung \(1267-1326\). The text, organized in questions and answers, discusses the philosophy of the Great Perfection from the standpoint of logic \(mtshan nyid\)."](#)

As far as not strictly scholarly works are concerned, we have to mention the Ban po Dzogchen Teachings according to Lopon Tenzin Namdak (transcribed and edited by John M. Reynolds, Bonpo Translation Project, Vidyadhara Publications, San Diego and Amsterdam, 1992), which contains an introduction to rDzog>s chen and discussions about the position of the Great Perfection with respect to other Buddhist philosophical views.

[Further, in 1993, two other works appeared. The first is Heart Drops of](#)

Dharmakaya: Dzogchen Practice of the Bon Tradition (edited by Richard Dixey with an Introduction by Per Kværne, Snow Lion Publications, Ithaca, New York). It consists of a translation and commentary by Lopon Tenzin Namdak of the 'Odgsal rdzogs pa then po'i lam gyi rim pa khrid yig kun to bzang po'i saying tig, a text written by the Bonpo master Shar rdza bKra shis rGyal mtshan (1859-1934).x' This publication is the first to be available to Western readers of an entire rDzogs then text, and represents an interesting source of reference based on the oral Bonpo tradition. The same applies to Wonders of the Natural Mind: The Essence of Dzogchen in the Native Bon Tradition of Tibet (Station Hill, New York) by Geshe Tenzin Wangyal, which provides historical, philosophical and practical explanations about the Great Perfection based on the textual knowledge and personal experience of the author.

A FEW WORDS ON METHODOLOGY

Notwithstanding the distinctive value of the above-mentioned works, there is still need for a comprehensive study of the Great Perfection in the Bon religion. Until an interactive research is carried out on Bonpo and rNying in a rDzogs chen literature, many questions are bound to be left in a self-perfected state beyond answer-to paraphrase the doctrines we will be analyzing shortly-particularly with respect to the relevance, influence and 'liability' of the Bonpo Great Perfection doctrines vis-a-vis those embraced by the Old School. The amount of textual sources that remains to be investigated is quite vast, and the present work has no pretense of being exhaustive." As a matter of fact, in embarking on this research, we have felt like Tibetan pilgrims who respectfully throw a little stone onto the heap of a mountain-pass while proclaiming the invincibility of the gods.

We have therefore decided that it was important and appropriate to present in the first place a descriptive analysis of the view of the Bonpo Great Perfection. After having identified textual sources that appeared to be most directly concerned with this view, we have tried to address the question of how its relevant doctrines could have been presented in a way that would have been not only comprehensive and intelligible but also exempt of prejudiced theoretical superimpositions. In that respect, we have chosen to avoid the use of Sanskrit equivalents for given Tibetan terms, preferring to render them word for word or to leave them in the Tibetan original." We have also refrained from adopting hermeneutical stands that follow a trend in contemporary religious studies whereby Oriental doctrines are approached from an experiential viewpoint." Such exercises can be very fascinating, but it also seems that they may result in another kind of cultural superimposition, where given doctrines are reformulated according to Western philosophical and psychological frames of reference, rather than being presented on their own terms."y

As a general remark, the sources examined appear to be quite technical in nature, notwithstanding the fact that they are for the most part written in verse. They are manuals where the metaphysical and the soteriological, the absolute and the particular, the macrocosmic and the microcosmic, the real and the ideal continuously coalesce, and such a characteristic makes their interpretation at times problematic. Their technical nature is also reflected in the usage of specific terms, all deeply interconnected, which are not merely descriptive, but represent the very core of the doctrine.⁹⁰ Many of these terms, which are found in both

Bonpo and rNying ma literatures, are not new when considered from a broad mahayanic philosophical perspective. But the meaning that they assume in the rDzogs chen context is, and this reformulation constitutes one of the fundamental traits of the Great Perfection doctrinal position. A 'correct' interpretation of those terms is virtually tantamount to the understanding of the doctrines under study. Moreover, since we believe it necessary to let the sources speak for themselves, if some ground has to be provided for further comparative research, we have discussed and related those terms primarily to the context of the selected rDzogs chen textual materials in which they appear.

The remaining part of this Introduction is dedicated to a descriptive analysis of the philosophical view of the Great Perfection, based upon selected excerpts" and supported by information drawn from the living oral tradition, particularly from dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma of the TBMC.⁹² Further, we will propose a critical edition and translation of two inedited textual sources. We have deemed it useful to present them in their entirety because of the rather comprehensive way in which they elaborate upon the subject-matter, and because they are representative of the literary productions belonging to the respected textual categories of the uninterruptedly transmitted Word (bka' ma) and written treasures (gter ma).

The first text is The Twelve Little Tantras from the Zhang Zhung Aural Transmission of the Great Perfection (rDzogs pa chen po zhang zhung snyan rgyud las rGyud bu chung bcu gnyis).⁹³ The second is The View which is like the Lion's Roar (lTa ba seng ge sgra bsgrags); it belongs to the Lower of the Three Cycles of Proclamations of the Great Perfection, carried out in the Land of Subterranean Beings (rDzogs clien bsGrags pa skor gsuin, 'Og klu yul du bsgrags pa'i skor).

The Twelve Little Tantras expounds the precepts of the Great Perfection from the defined setting of a supernatural field" through a wellknown canonical pattern of question and answer.⁹⁵ Altogether, the 'cosmic setting' and the way in which the text presents notions such as those of the Three Bodies (sku gsum)," the fivefold aspect⁹⁷ of the Pure and-Perfect-Mind (byang chub kyi sems),⁹⁸ the five poisons (dug Inga) transcended as Five Wisdoms (ye shes higa) and the Five Wisdoms themselves,' the fivefold representation of the essential points of the teachings as View (lta ba), Meditation (sgom pa), Conduct (spyod pa), Fruit ('bras bu) and Realization (rtogs pa),¹⁰⁰ of commitment (dam tshig) and empowerment (dbang),¹⁰¹ as well as the rhetorical praise of the Great

Perfection with respect to all forms of teachings, the classification of the latters¹⁰ and the final invocation-dedication" would point to a definite acknowledgement of the tantric notions developed out of mainstream Mahayana Buddhism."

The Vieu which is like the Lion's Roar opens without any description of supernatural setting, but with a rather matter-of-fact declaration that the teachings therein contained were bestowed as a blessing by the Compassionate Teacher Kun to bZang po gShen lha 'Od dkar.¹⁰⁵ It proceeds without further ado in claiming the extraordinariness and superiority of its precepts in terms of real efficaciousness-hence the choice of the metaphor of the lion, symbolizing power and nobility. The complexity of the Great Perfection's view is stressed all along within the text, but in fact this seems more an acknowledgement of the'difficulty of simplicity' rather than an intended deterrent to the understanding of the doctrines at hand. The text guides the reader, in a very pedagogical way, through the fundamental postulates of Condition (ngang), (Ultimate) Nature (rang bzhin) and Identity (bdag nyid),¹⁰⁶ to that of the Basis of all (kun gzhi).¹⁰⁷ And even though it is gShen lha 'Od dkar himself who supposedly speaks in the first person and defines what and in which form he does or doesn't teach, one has the impression of being in the presence of a very human but certainly knowledgeable and accomplished instructor, who seems confident in the spiritual capacity of the pupils and provides them, in a simple and straightforward way, with the vital information that will finally allow them to plunge in the dimension of their quintessential being. The fact that the text does not openly refer to notions such as the distinctions of Bodies, Wisdoms and so on is meaningful; it could possibly indicate the character of the target audience, namely one that is not very concerned or does not indulge, either for reasons of education or tendency, in dogmatic speculations. Or also, that these notions are so much taken for granted that there is no need to refer to them at all. It might also be indicative of a point of time in the history of these doctrines when they were presented and practised just as they were formulated, without need for legitimizing superimpositions.¹⁰⁸

Be that as it may, both texts appear as well structured and coherently devised. In expounding the view of the Great Perfection they reveal traits of universality and atemporality that seem to be shared by many Eastern and Western mystical traditions. In our opinion the view of the Great Perfection represents the culminating point of Tibetan religions in the interpretation of the imponderable Absolute, and deserves an inspiring place of honour within the scope of

historico- religious studies.



Mt. Kailash, courtesy of Bya 'Phur Nam mkha' rGyal mtslian (1965-1995).

Do not go abroad. Return within yourself. In the inward man dwells truth. If you find that you are by nature mutable, transcend yourself. But remember in doing so that you must also transcend yourself even as a reasoning soul.

[St. Augustine \(354-430\)109](#)

THE PHILOSOPHICAL VIEW OF THE GREAT PERFECTION IN THE BON RELIGION

The View (Ita ba)

The expression *rdzogs pa chen po'i Ita ba*, the View of the Great Perfection, obviously implies the literal connotation of theoretical view or philosophical way of seeing; but as will be shown through this presentation, this 'view' detaches itself from the common Buddhist connotation of theory or (wrong) view¹ to cover the whole gamut of doctrinal, metaphysical and soteriological principles pertaining to the Great Perfection."

The first observation to be made is that the teachings of the Great Perfection are traditionally addressed to individuals who still live in a relative condition, where suffering is concretely experienced, but who are deemed to possess a superior capacity of understanding."= Therefore, instead of fostering mere speculative knowledge, the Great Perfection teachings, as they are expounded through the principles related to the Basis (*Yzhi*),I` concentrate uncompromisingly on assisting the individual to transcend the confusion and narrowness that characterize the relative condition, so that one's own Ultimate Nature (*rang bzhi*), which is the self-perfected state of Enlightenment (*saiigs rgyas pa*) existing as a potentiality in all beings, may be recognized. When these liberating means are applied through the Path (*lam*), the teachings are centred on actualizing the Awareness (*rig pa*)" that the source and the final point of all external and internal phenomena related to the condition of living beings is the unlimited and ineffable state of Reality (*Bon nyid*), which is one with one's own Ultimate Nature. When the teachings describe the Fruit (*'bras bit*), they imply the definitive 'return' to the state of Reality; and since that state is precisely one's intrinsically enlightened Nature, the Fruit is said to already be spontaneously accomplished."

The Reality is called Great Perfection because it is not affected by the limitations that characterize all phenomena, such as their transitoriness, the causes that generate them, and the effects to which they are subjected. It cannot

be defined as a meeting of opposite principles, nor as an alternation of forces. It is intrinsically non-dual (gnyis coed). Therefore, it cannot be identified with the state transcending suffering (mya ngan las Was pa) enjoyed by enlightened beings, nor with the state of transmigration ('khor ba), since it encompasses and at the same time transcends them both. It is not a state where distinction or choice is to be made between 'good' and 'bad'. Nor is it a state that can be approached and achieved in a gradual way, by going through successive stages of mental and physical practices.

[These ideas are expressed in the ITa ha la shan Syron ma, "The Lamp that Clarifies the View" \(p. 278,4-7\), a short gter Ina belonging to the cycle of the Three Proclamations:"](#)

*rDzogs pa chen po kun gnas te /
rang bzhin lhun rdzogs chen po nyid /
rdzogs pa chen por ye nas gnas /
thams cad rdzogs pa'i rang bzhin la /
bzang ngan blangs dor gnyis su med /
theg pa lam dang bsgam [sic] bsgrub rtsogs /
rdzogs chen 'di la ngas ma bshad /
rgyu 'bras gnyis su ngas ma bshad /
skye shi med par lhun gyis gnas /
gnas pa nyid la gnyis su med /
des na bon dang gshen rab med /
rgyu 'bras theg par btags pas nor /
lta bas bltas pa 'khrul par snang /
lam gyi rim pa ye nas med /
nye lam bde rdzogs lam gyis [sic] mchog /
'jug lta spyod bsrungs gnyis mi minga' /
bsgom dang blo yis the tshom med /
des na rdzogs chen nam mkha'i klong //*

The Great Perfection abides (in) everything; (it is) the great, spontaneously perfected Nature (which) exists as Great Perfection from the origin. As to (this Ultimate) Nature which is totally perfected, (it) has no duality of acceptance (and) rejection, good (or) bad. (Following) paths (and) vehicles, performing meditation: 1''' have not proclaimed (that) the Great Perfection (consists) in this.''' I have not proclaimed (that it exists) as cause and effect. It exists spontaneously without birth and death. As to (that state of) being

itself,"9 (it is) without duality; therefore, (it) has no Bon nor gShen rab.'2°
(It is) erroneous to tie (it) to the vehicles of Cause and Fruit."

Investigated through (a specific) view, (it) appears in (a) delusive (way).
From the beginning, (it) has no graduality of paths; (it is) the best path, the
direct path of perfection and bliss. There is no view (to be) followed, nor
conduct (to be) observed.¹²² There is no uncertainty (produced) by
thoughts and meditation .¹²³ Therefore, (it is) Great Perfection, (it is like)
the Expanse of Space.¹²¹

Taken by itself, the affirmation that this absolute state cannot be found in
meditation seems to go against and dismiss the whole range of endeavours that
followers of lower Vehicles painstakingly undertake with the aim of reaching the
much aspired state that transcends suffering (inya ngan las Was pa). However, in
the View of the Great Perfection, meditation is considered as a contingent state, a
child's play," because no matter how profound and accomplished that may be, it
is nevertheless considered to imply the perception of a subject envisaging its
object. Therefore, how can it be possible to actually transcend all suffering by
using a means that constitutes the cause, or the emblem, so to speak, of all
duality? "The Commentary to The View which is like the Lion's Roar" (ITa ba
song ge sgra bsgrags kyi 'grel pa, rD:(gs chen bsGrags pa skorgsum, pp. 826,4-7,
827,3-7)'² briefly describes the way in which the followers of what we can infer
to be the Seventh Vehicle of the Fruit' ²⁷ endeavour to find the absolute state by
practising meditation on specific deities; how this view is still maintained in the
Eighth Vehicle of the Fruit,'² although it is approached from a more
sophisticated standpoint; and how this view loses its validity when one has
realized the 'true' state of meditation:

Theg pa 'og ma bas sngags phyi nang gi lugs ni sgom yod du 'dod /
 de yang dngos po mtshan ma rang du 'dod ta [*]¹²⁹ /
 zhal yas dang gdan dang yi ge 'bru dang /
 sku dang rgyan dang cha lugs sgom pa'o /
 theg pa ye gshen pa yang klong du ma gyur bar du sgom du yod par 'dod /
 de yang dngos po mtshan ma mi sgom ste /
 zhi gnas dang lhaq mthong cha mnyam pa de /
 ma yengs pa'i ting nge 'dzin gyi sgom pas sgom yod do /
 [...] sgom du yod pa'i dus tshod ni /
 ma rtogs pa'i dus dang /
 rtags [* read rtogs] par bya ba'i thabs kyi dus so /
 de la rtogs pa'i dus na sgom du med te [sic]¹³⁰ /
 sgom mi sgom gyi bye brag mi shes pas /
 rtags [* read rtogs] pa klong du gyur ba'i dus na yang sgom du med de /
 bsgom bya'i yul dang sgom byed kyi blo gnyis ka ban [* read bon] nyid
 dam sems nyid du shes pas so /
 yang sgom par bya ba'i yul pha rol na med par rtogs la /
 sgom par byed pa'i shes pa tshu ral [* read rol] na med par rtogs pa'i
 sgom med do //

Lower Vehicles (which follow) the system of outer and inner formulas maintain (that it) exists (in) meditation. By (mentally) assuming the aspect (and) characteristics (of a certain deity), (they) meditate (upon its) countenance, seat, seed-syllable, body, ornaments and garments. Also the followers (of) the Vehicle (of) the Primordial gShen maintain that

as long as (it is) not realized, it is (found) in meditation, (although) (they) do not meditate (upon) the aspect (and) characteristics (of a certain deity). (They say) it is (found in) meditation through the practice of undistracted meditative absorption (which consists in) equalizing peaceful-abiding and superior seeing." When (it is said that) it is (found) in meditation, it is (either) a method to foster realization or lack of realization. In that respect, when one has realized (it), it is not in meditation since the difference between meditation (and) non-meditation is not perceived; also, when realization has fully matured, it is not (found) in meditation (because) both the mind that performs meditation and the object that is meditated (upon) are perceived as the Mind-itself,j32 the Reality. Moreover it is not (found in) meditation, when (one) realizes (that) there is no object on one side to

he meditated (upon), (and) no consciousness on the other that performs meditation.

[In practice, as said in "The Explanation of the Twelve Little Tantras" \(rGyud bu chung bcu gnyis kyi don bstan pa, pp. 187,6-188,1\),133 it is impossible to experience and perceive the absolute state by any other means than that state itself:](#)

*Sems nyid mug dang 'dra ste gzhan gsal rang mi gsal /
rang la rang gis gsang pas rang gsang thabs kyis chod /
thabs gzhan 'khrul cing 'khor ba'i gnas su lhung //*

[The Mind-itself is like the eye, \(without which\) other \(things\) cannot appear by themselves. Since it is naturally concealed in itself, it can \(only\) be discovered by \(entering\) its secret \(nature\). Other ways are delusive and \(make one\) fall into the sphere of transmigration."](#)

[In the ITa ha la shan sgron mna \(op. cit., p. 278,1\) we also read that the teachings therein contained have been expounded by the Compassionate Teacher Kun to bZang po. Instructions of this kind are traditionally not considered as mere verbal expression, but rather as expounded from the state of contemplation \(dgongs pa\),13i which is referred to as the Condition of Kun to bZang po \(kun to hzang po'i ngan,c \), 'manifesting itself' on a supernatural plane in the form of deities such as gShen Iha 'Od dkar. The latter is very often called the Compassionate Teacher \(thugs rje'i stun pa\) in the texts. dPon slob'Phrin la Nyi ma informs us that the term kun to hzang po can be interpreted as "dus kun to \(kun In\) dri rna rna hgos pa \(hzang po\)", "at all times wearing no stains", and that it refers to the Self-Originated Primordial Wisdom of the Basis \(gzhi'i rang 'hyung ye sites\)," whereby it is also styled Kun to bZang po of the Basis \(gzhi'i kun to hzang po\). He also points out that the term kun to hzang po is interpreted in a twofold way: "gdags su med pa'i Knit to hZang po" and "gdags su yod pa'i Kun to hZang po"; "gdags su med pa'i Kun to hZang po", the inexpressible Kun to bZang po, symbolizes the Body of Reality \(Bon sku\). The expressible Kun to bZang po, "gdags su yod pa'i Kun to hZang po", refers, as in the case of our texts, to deities or enlightened beings that are expressible in terms of their attributes and qualifications, such as gShen Iha 'Od dkar and Ta pi Hri tsa.137 These two figures respectively symbolize the Body of Perfection \(rDzogs pa'i sku\) and the Body of Emanation \(sPrul pa'i sku\).138](#)

The 'personification' of Kim to bZang po is nevertheless to be understood in a purely symbolic way. Kun to bZang po is the Primordial Teacher (ye nyid kyi stoic pa)''' because 'he' represents the Reality as well as the original recognition of Reality from the part of the individual, a recognition before which, it is said, nothing existed.''' This Reality is called the Condition of the All-Good (kin to bzang po'i n,c ang), because it encompasses everything without any selectivity, and because it exists in equality without any extreme or limitation. It is said to be devoid of inherent nature (rang h:jiin med pa), but at the same time it is endowed with a dynamic potential (rtsal) whereby it can manifest itself in all sorts of ways.''' It maybe described through attributes-in order, for instance, to facilitate understanding by the ordinary intellect-but still it remains ineffable and inexplicable even to the Primordial Teacher himself.''' This Reality exists from beginningless time. It is immutable. It cannot be forged, artificially obtained, manipulated, corrected or modified.

As to the doctrine which refers to this Reality, it is said:

*Khyad par chen po'i gzhung /
dngos po'i gnas lugs /
bon thams cad rang bzhin ka dag ye nas sangs rgyas pa yin no //*

The doctrine of the Great Difference is the essential Way of Being,'43
Primordial Enlightenment, the (Ultimate) Nature (of) all phenomena, pure
from the beginning.'44

It is called the doctrine of the Great Difference because of Kun to bZang po's first realization of the Ultimate Nature of Reality. It is Kun to bZang po's realization that makes the difference between perceiving everything as the self-perfected Reality, rather than as transmigration or as the state transcending suffering.''; However, Kun to bZang po is nothing else but the quintessential state of every individual:

Kun tu bzang po ni rang gi byang chub sems so //

Kun to bZang po is one's Pure-and-Perfect-Mind.'''

The way of appearing of the Absolute Reality is also called the Great Manifestation or Great Play (rol pa then po),'47 because all that manifests itself

[is understood as originating from the unobstructed dynamic potential \(rtsal\) of the Basis.](#)" "The Commentary to the View which is like the Lion's Roar" (lTa ba song ge sgra hsgags kyi 'grel pa, op. cit., p. 821,2-6) specifies that:

*Rol pa na [sic] gnyis te /
dag pa bon gyi nyid du rol pa dang /
ma dag pa 'khrul snang du rol pa'o /
de yang gzhi rtogs pa la rten nas /
dag pa bon nyid rol pa ni /
sku dang ye shes su shar te /
zhing khamis bkod pa phun gsum [sic] 'thogs [sic] pa /
mtshan dang dpe byed [sic]¹⁴⁹ che ba'i yon tan /
ting nge 'dzin gyi yan lag brgyad cu dang /
'od zer spros bsdu 'jig rten gyi khamis gang ba'o //*

Manifestation is (of) two (kinds): the pure (one), manifesting itself as Reality itself, and the impure (one), manifesting itself as delusive appearance. Based upon realization of the Basis,

[pure manifestation \(as\) Reality arises as Body and Primordial Wisdom,""
\(as\) the perfectly laid out pure fields,"" \(as\) the great qualities \(of those\)
displaying the signs and attributes,'s' \(as\) the eighty components of
meditative absorption,"; \(as\) the diffusion and retraction of light-rays filling
the mundane sphere.";](#)

*Ma dag pa 'khrul snang du rol pa ni /
gnas pa'i sa gsum /
dgos pa'i grong khyer drug /
thun mongs du 'gro ba'i lam lnga /
skye ba'i gnas bzhi /
de la smin pa'i bye brag bzhi bcu rtsa cig ltar rol /
de ltar rol pa shar kyang gzhi'i ngo bor gcig go //*

The impure (one), manifesting itself as delusive appearance, (arises as) the three places of existence,"⁵ the six cities of necessity," the five paths of ordinary beings" (and) the four locations of birth,⁷ which in turn (appear) as the forty-one kinds of fully developed manifestation.jS' Although manifestation arises in those ways, it is one in the essence of the Basis.

The Basis of All (kun (Vzhi)

The 'Basis' which is mentioned in the last quotation represents one of the key notions of the Great Perfection doctrines. The term *kun gzhi* as understood in that context has a different meaning when compared to the one previously ascribed to the same term by the Indian Yogacara school. This philosophical school attributed the name *kim ggzhi* (Skr. *alaya*) to one of the eight kinds of consciousnesses (*rttani par sties pa*, Skr. *vijitana*) with which it deemed sentient beings to be endowed. In particular the *alatla-vijuiirta*, or basis-consciousness, was thought to contain all sorts of imprints (*bag chag*s, Skr. *vasatta*) produced by causes and actions, and for that reason was considered impure. However, once karmic defilements were purified, this basis-consciousness was believed to disappear altogether to leave room, as it were, for the state of Enlightenment.

According to the View of the Bonpo Great Perfection, the Basis is not simply the container for karmic imprints (*bag chags*), but the receptacle and source of all phenomena of transmigration and the state transcending suffering; for this reason it is also called the Basis of all (*kun gyi g:hi* or simply *kun g:hi*). The Basis of all is the primordial condition which has always been pure (*ka dag*) and spontaneously accomplished (*lhtuigrub*). It is the source from which everything manifests itself. However, as a mirror impartially reflects all kinds of objects, the Basis remains unaffected by the arising of all phenomena. That is why in the previous excerpt it is said that all manifestation is one in the essence of the Basis. It is important to note that the qualifications of the Basis are actually those of the quintessential state of the individual, taken from a macrocosmic perspective. The Basis has an unobstructed capacity of arising in all sorts of ways (*'hyung rung lla 'gag pa*); the fact that appearances (*snang ba*) may be perceived as the state of transmigration or the state transcending suffering depends on the understanding of one's Ultimate Nature: if one's Nature is recognized in its essence, which is said to be pure and self-perfected from the origin, that recognition is Primordial Enlightenment (*ye sangs rgyas pa*), the Condition of Kun to bZang po (*kun hi bzang po'i n(Ong)*). Delusion (*'khrul pa*) and transmigration derive from lack of this recognition, from not acknowledging the mistaken way in which the inferior mind (*dman pa'i sems*) conceives itself and its environment. "The Explanation of the Twelve Little Tantras" (*rGtlu bu clung bcu gnyis kyi don hstan pa*, op. cit., p. 182,2-5) elaborates this perspective as follows:

gZhi la spyi gcod rnam pa gsum /
sangs gzhi 'khrul gzhi 'byung gzhi gsum /
sangs gzhi ka dag chen po'o /
'khrul gzhi bag chags sogs pa'i gzhi /
'byung gzhi lhun grub lung ma bstan /
'khor 'das kun gyi gzhi ru gyur /
rtogs shing 'khrul te gnas skabs bon /
sems ni rang bzhin 'od gsal la /
rtogs pa'i shes rab skyes pa yis /
rtogs pas kun bzang ye sangs rgyas /
sems ni rang bzhin 'od gsal la /
rtogs pa'i shes rab ma skyes pas /
sems can 'khor bar ye nas 'khrul /
de ma yin la der bzung pas /
thag pa sbrul du 'khrul dang 'dra /
gsum du bstan yang ngo bo gcig /
dbyings chen gcig gis kun la khyab //

As to the Basis, (it is) defined in three general ways: the Basis (of) Enlightenment, the Basis (of) delusion, and the Source-Basis. 160 The Basis (of) Enlightenment is the great primordial purity. The Basis (of) delusion (is) the foundation of (karmic) imprints and so on. The Source-Basis (is) neutral" and spontaneously accomplished. Transmigration (and) the state transcending suffering occur in the Basis of all. Realization and delusion (are) circumstantial phenomena. As for the Mind, (its) Nature (is)

Clear Light; 161 in this respect, when the superior knowledge of realization is generated, (that) realization is Primordial Enlightenment, Kun (tu) bZang (po). As for the Mind, (its) Nature (is) Clear Light; in this respect, when the superior knowledge of realization is not generated, (that is) the original delusion (of) sentient beings (appearing) as transmigration. When it is not that," it is taken as the other,'64 as (when) a rope is mistaken for a snake.'6' Even if (the Basis) is explained as threefold, (its) essence (is) one. (It is) the great, single Dimension¹⁶⁶ encompassing everything.

The Pure-and-Perfect-Mind (byang chub kyi sems)

[When viewed with respect to living beings, this all-encompassing single Dimension of the Basis is called the Mind-itself \(sems nyid\) 117](#) or the Pure-and-Perfect-Mind (byang chub kyi sems). In Western translations [this last term is usually rendered by its Sanskrit equivalent, bodhicitta.'1'](#) The bodhicitta to which rDzogs chen doctrines refer to is the 'absolute bodhicitta', one of the two kinds of bodhicitta that we find already asserted in early Mahayana Sutras such as the Samtdltinirmocatta, and which basically indicates the state of Enlightenment." The translation of the term byang chub kyi sems with Pure-and-Perfect-Mind is inspired by an explanation contained in rDzogs pa chen po yang rtse klong chen gyi ages don (p. 180, 4-5):'70

*Byang chub kyi sems de /
byang ste stong nyid skye med ka dag tu gnas /
chub ste snang ba 'gag med lhun grub tu gnas /
sems nyid la gnyis snang dbyer med du gnas so //*

The Pure-and-Perfect-Mind is pure (b,'a ig), (since it) exists as the primordial purity (of) unborn emptiness; it is perfect (chub), (since it) exists as the spontaneous accomplishment (of) unobstructed appearance. As to the Mind-itself, (it) exists as the inseparable display (of these) two.

[Thus, as the passage shows, the Pure-and-Perfect-Mind is represented by the state of inseparability \(dbyer ba med pa\) or non-duality \(gnyis sit med pa\) of unborn emptiness, which is primordially pure, and the unobstructed appearance of phenomena, which is spontaneously accomplished. This principle of non-duality of primordial purity and spontaneous accomplishment is a distinctive feature characterizing the View of the Great Perfection."](#) It is precisely through such non-dual modality that the Great Perfection postulates and acknowledges the ontological identity of the Ultimate Nature of living beings and the Reality (bon nyid). The rDzogs pa chen po yang rtse klong chen gyi nges don (op. cit., p. 179,1-2; 179,3-4;179,4-180,1) asserts this principle of ontological identity by means of a threefold pattern involving an example (dpe), a token (rtags) and a meaning (don). The example is that of Space (natn inkha'); the token is that of the Mind-itself (seats nyid); the meaning is the state of Reality (bon nyid):

*Nam mkha' stong pa'i ngang nas snang srid sna tshogs su snang /
bon nyid stong pa'i ngang nas bon can mtshan mar snang /
sems nyid stong pa'i ngang nas sems can sna tshogs su snang ngo /*

From the empty Condition (of) Space, appearance (and) coming-into-being appear in various (ways); from the empty Condition (of) Reality, phenomena appear with (their) characteristics; from the empty Condition (of) the Mind-itself, sentient beings appear in (their) variety.

*dPe nam mkha'i ngo bo mtshan mas stong pa bzhin /
don bon nyid kyi ngo bo yang zhen pas stong /
rtags sems nyid kyi ngo bo yang 'dzin rtog gis stong ngo //*

Just as the essence of Space, the example, (is) empty in (terms of) characteristics, also the essence of Reality, the meaning, (is) empty in (terms of) partiality; likewise, the essence of the Mind-itself, the token, is empty in (terms of) conceptualization and grasping.

*sNang srid thams cad nam mkha'i ngang du gnyis med /
bon can thams cad bon nyid kyi ngang du gnyis med /
sems can thams cad sems nyid kyi ngang du gnyis su med de /
des na bon nyid sems nyid nam mkha'i dbyings nyid gsum yang
gnyis med gcig ste /
rang bzhin med pas stong nyid du gcig /
ma 'gags par 'phyar bas snang ba gcig /
tha dad med pas gnyis med du gcig pa'o //*

Since there is no duality between the condition of Space (and) all appearance (and) coming-into-being; (since) there is no duality between the condition of Reality (and) all phenomena; (and since) there is no duality between the condition of the Mind-itself (and) all sentient beings, thus, also the Dimension of Space, the Mind-itself (and) Reality are not two (but) one. Since there is no (inherent) nature, (they are) one as emptiness. Since (it) arises in an unobstructed way, (it is) one appearance. Since (appearance and emptiness) are not distinguished, (they) are the same as non-duality.

The Pure-and-Perfect-Mind is empty, it is not generated by primary or instrumental causes (rgyu dang rkyen); it cannot be substantially produced. It is primordially pure because from the origin it is not affected by any sort of delusion and also because any delusion that may arise is spontaneously released. 172 The latter idea can be explained by comparing the arising and releasing of delusion to the arising and releasing of thoughts. When a virtuous, negative or neutral thought arises in our mind, we may follow it, judge, elaborate, translate it into physical actions and so on; but if we simply observe the arising thought and let it be, instead of following or judging it, that thought will eventually dissolve in our mind, since it is not provided with any ground for 'concretization' from its inception.

Although appearance (snang ba) as such is generated by causes and is consistent with specific individual perceptions, it represents nonetheless the unlimited way in which the Pure-and-Perfect-Mind may arise. Therefore all appearance is not considered as being completely non-existent in the View of the Great Perfection. Nonetheless, if one investigates appearance, no tangible essence can be produced, because appearance is inherently devoid of a substantiable nature (rang bzhin med pa). It has no inherent nature as the Pure-and-Perfect-Mind .171

The View of the Great Perfection further acknowledges the ontological identity of the macrocosmic and microcosmic realities through the threefold axiom of Condition (ngang), Ultimate Nature (rang bzhin) and Identity (bdag nyid). The Condition (ngang) is the Basis of all (kun gzhi)-primordially pure (ka dag) and not generated by primary and instrumental causes. It is the origin of all phenomena. The Ultimate Nature (rang bzhin) is said to be unaltered (ma bcos pa), because the Basis is spontaneously accomplished (lhun grub) in terms of its innate potential (rtsal) for manifestation (rol pa). The non-duality between the Ultimate Nature (i.e., the unaltered appearance of all phenomena) and the Condition (i.e., the Basis of all) is called the Identity (bdag nyid).17' This unicum of primordial purity (ka dag) and spontaneous accomplishment (lhun grub) is the Way of Being (gnas lugs) of the Pureand-Perfect-Mind.

Dimension and Primordial Wisdom (dbyings dang ye shes)

Following the above-mentioned threefold axiom, the Basis of all is also referred to as the empty Dimension (dhyings)¹⁷⁵ where the Primordial Wisdom (ye shes) unfolds and abides. This pair of Dimension and Wisdom is a representation of the Pure-and-Perfect-Mind: the Mind is uniform, like Space (Ham mkha'); it is unaltered, like the Dimension (dbyings) of Space; it is infinite, like the Expanse (klong) of Space. Space, Dimension and Expanse are notions used to exemplify the Mind-itself as the unbiased receptacle of its creative potential, just like the universe contains all existing phenomena. The Primordial Wisdom is said to represent the 'clear' or 'appearing aspect' (gsal cha/ snang cha) of the Mind-itself, and is qualified as active (g.yo ba).¹⁷⁶ Let us see how "The Explanation of the Twelve Little Tantras" (rGyud bu c{tung bcu gnyis kyi don bstan pa, op. cit., pp. 185,3-6) elaborates the interrelation of Dimension and Primordial Wisdom:

*dByings dang ye shes spyi gcod gnyis su bstan /
dbyings ni kun la khyab ste phyogs ris bral /
dbyings nyid rnam par dag ste glo bur dri ma bral /
ngo bo stong par gnas te mtshon du med /
dbyings nas thams cad 'byung ste mtshan ma med //*

Dimension and Primordial Wisdom are explained in two general ways: the Dimension, encompassing everything, (is) without partiality (and) inclination. Being pure, the Dimension itself is without accidental defilements. Since (in) essence (it) exists as emptiness, (it is) without definition. Since the Dimension is (that) from (which) everything originates, (it is) without characterization.

*Ye shes du mar bstan yang lnga ru 'dus /
de yang bsdus na ci lta ji snyed do /
ye shes ngo bo gsal ba ste /
stong nyid ngang nas gsal bar mtshon /
ngang gis stong pas dbyings zhes bya /
rang bzhin gsal bas ye shes bya //*

[Primordial Wisdom is explained as manifold, and \(is also\) reduced to five;](#)
but when (one) draws (them all) together, there are (about) as many as (one
may) conceive. Primordial Wisdom is clear (in) essence, (it) clearly comes
forth from the Condition (of) emptiness. Being naturally empty, (the
Condition) is called Dimension; Being clear, the (Ultimate) Nature is called
Primordial Wisdom.

*gNyis su med pas spros dang bral /
spros dang bral ba de nyid las /
rang bzhin gsal bas rang 'byung ye shes yin /
de ltar rtogs pas rang rig ye shes yin /
rnam rtog ngang gis dag pas mi rtog ye shes yin /
spros dang bral bas dbyings shes gnyis med do /
ngo bo gnyis med thig le nyag gcig go //*

[Being non-dual, \(Dimension and Wisdom\) \(are\) not diversified. 171 When
out of that non-diversification \(the Ultimate\) Nature shines forth, \(it\) is the
Self-Originated Primordial Wisdom. The realization \(that it is\) in that way"
is \(called\) the Primordial Wisdom of Self-Awareness; naturally purified
\(from\) conceptuality, \(it\) is the Non-conceptual Primordial Wisdom. Being
without diversification, Dimension and \(Primordial\) Wisdom do not exist
\(as a\) duality. The essence \(is\) non-dual, it is the Single Essence."](#)

The Beginning of Transmigration

As we have seen, the Basis of all is the empty Dimension of Reality where the Self-Originated Primordial Wisdom abides. This Primordial Wisdom represents the state of Enlightenment (sangs rgyas pa), which is the ultimate, transcendental state of being. The Ultimate Nature and attributes of the Basis mirror, so to speak, those of the Mind-itself. They constitute the theoretical premise through which an individual is hooked to the Ultimate Nature of the Mind (sans kyi rang h:hin). When there is clear understanding of the View, this understanding is supposed to be integrated in every moment of one's existence, so that one may eventually realize one's full potential, which the texts define as that of Body (skit), Speech ('sung), Mind (thugs), Qualities (yon tan) and Activity (pltrin las).'"I

dPon slob 'Phrin las Nvi ma specifies that with respect to an individual who follows the View of the Great Perfection, the Self-Originated Primordial Wisdom (ml,' '17 uric' t,e slit's) is also called 'the Clear Light which is the meaning' ((lon gi,i 'ad gsal), and it is styled the 'mother' (ma); the Primordial Wisdom of Self-Awareness (rang rig pa'i yt' skit's), which is the recognition of one's Ultimate Nature, is called 'the Clear Light which is the example' (dpt"'i 'od ,~sal),"" and it is styled the 'son' (hu).' '"

For people who have mastered the practice of contemplation, the actual recognition of one's Ultimate Nature occurs in the intermediate state after death (har llo), and it is thus compared to the encounter of 'mother' and 'child'."

This metaphor of the meeting of mother and child is quite an idyllic and vivid comparison: a child has immediate recognition of its mother and is never mistaken in that respect; through the perception of her presence, it experiences complete trust and security. If we view it in broader terms however, this metaphor in our opinion also entails a subtle implication. A child cannot remain a child forever. Eventually, it will have to find its own identity; it will have to discover 'the mother and son' that exist inseparably within itself. Awareness of one's own identity will then constitute the demarcating point between turning to the very source of happiness, or perpetrating attempts to seek happiness in the belief that it will be found outside oneself. If the individual realizes that his or her 'identity' is the state that in its emptiness and clarity exists in a non-dual and inseparable way, that will become the real emancipation, the state of true

Enlightenment." Without such an awareness, the individual will get lost in the delusive meanderings of particularization and dichotomy. According to the Great Perfection, such lack of awareness (tna rig pa) becomes the starting point of transmigration. As is said in the Byang chub sems gab pa dgu bskor (pp. 50,2-6):"⁶

gZha' tshon sgyu ma 'di la dpyad du med /
sgyu mas sgyu ma bslus pas gzhan dbang mngon sprul thob /
kun bzang ngang la ye med kun mnyam ste /
'khrul pa'i blo yi sgyu ma dang du blangs /
gzung 'dzin sgyu ma de ni zo chu'i rgyun ma 'dra /
bag chags de la zhen pas kun 'byung rang la shar /

kun 'byung rang la shar bas bdag dang gzhan du bzung /
'khrul pa de yis mnyam pa'i don la sgribs /
shes rab gsal bas 'khrul pa med par bya /
bdag dang gzhan du mi bzung kun 'byung bdag /
bag chags de la zhen pa'i zo chu'i rgyun ma bcad /
zo chu'i rgyud ma bcad pas sgyu ma brgyad du rtogs /
sgyu ma bslu ru med pas kun bzang ngang la mnyam //

This mirage"" is indefinite"" (like a) rainbow. When mirage is deceived by mirage,"" (that) results (in) manifest dependency." As for the Condition of Kun (tu) hzang (po), there is no (such thing from the) beginning, since it is totally equalized.⁷ The mirage of the deluded mind is acknowledged; that mirage of grasping (and) grasped is like the flowing of waterbuckets;" since (one) is biased with respect to that imprint," all (that) arises (seems) to conic forth by itself. Since all (that) arises (seems) to come forth by itself, (it is) conceived as self and other;"⁴ through that delusion, the state of equality is obscured. When superior knowledge shines forth, delusion is annihilated; all (that) arises (is) the self, (it is) not conceived as self and other, (and) the flowing of water-buckets of (one's) bias toward that imprint is discontinued.

When the chain of water-buckets is not severed, the mirage is perceived as

[eightfold.](#)" Being not deceived (by) mirage(s), the Condition (of) Kun (tu) bZang (po) (remains) equalized.

[What is the 'genetic' cause that prevents recognition of the Ultimate Nature? According to the texts, it is the so-called 'non-awareness simultaneously born' with sentient beings \(than gcig skyas pa'i ma rig pa\).](#)¹⁹⁶ It is this non-awareness (ma rig pa) of the Way of Being of the Basis/Mind-itself which consolidates into dichotomic perceptions and makes sentient beings miserable, until they are taught about their Nature and 'return' to it.

[As it is said:](#)"

*gZhi yi gnas tshul gnyug ma'i bon /
ye sangs rgyas pa yin bzhin du /
de ma shes te ma rig rmongs
lhan gcig skyes pa'i ma rig pa'o /
de nas phyin ci log gi blo /
de ma thag tu myur la rags /
bdag dang bdag gis 'dzin cing ltas /
kun tu rtags (read brtags) pa'i ma rig pa'o //*

[The Manner of Being of the Basis, the pristine phenomenon, is just Primordial Enlightenment; that not being known, \(one is\) confused \(by\) non-awareness; \(this\) is the non-awareness simultaneously born. Then, the fallacious mind suddenly and quickly gets coarse by investigating and conceiving through the I and mine; \(this\) is the non-awareness that defines everything.](#)¹⁹⁸

[When viewed from the absolute standpoint of the Basis however, this inherent non-awareness is an accidental \(glo bur\) phenomenon, because even if one is overpowered by the limitations of the deluded mind \('khrul pa'i blo\), one is in fact never separated from one's Ultimate Nature.](#)¹⁹⁹

Turning Back to the Source

*Kun gzhi stong pa rgyu med las /
sgra ni dbyings kyi rtsal du shar /
rig pa stong pa rgyu med las /
'od ni ye shes rtsal du shar /
dbyer med stong pa rgyu med las /
zer ni thig le'i rtsal du shar /
sgra 'od zer gsum rkyen byas nas /
ma rtogs lus ngag yid du 'khrul /
'bras bu khamis gsum 'khor bar 'khyams //*

From the Basis (of) all, empty (and) without cause, sound, the dynamic potential of the Dimension, arises. From the Awareness, empty (and) without cause, light, the dynamic potential (of) Primordial Wisdom, appears. From the inseparability, empty (and) without cause, rays, the dynamic potential of the Essence, appear. When sound, light and rays are taken (as) instrumental causes" (that) ignorance (turns into) the delusion of body speech (and) mind; the result (is) wandering in the circle (of) the three spheres.=`

As we can understand from this passage, sound, light and rays together represent the dynamic potential through which all circumstantial appearance, all phenomena come into being. When related to the Basis, sound, light and rays are styled 'the spontaneously accomplished sound, light and rays of the Basis' (chi la llnu , "i is grub pal sgra 'od zer gsum). When related to the perception of living beings, they are defined as 'the ordinary sound, light and rays arising through instrumental causes' ('phral du rkyen Kt/is 'char ba'i sgra 'od :ergsun). When perceived during contemplative practices, they are called 'the sound, light and rays arising as experiences on the path' (lain rtags nyams In char ha'i sgra 'od

:ergsum). Finally, when their appearance is experienced in the intermediate state after death (bar do), they are 'the sound light and rays appearing at the time of the intermediate state' (bar do [dus su 'char ba'i sgra 'od zer gsum](#)).²⁰² [The quality, if we may say so, of these three great appearances \(snang ba then po gsum\)](#)²⁰³ is, once again, determined by the perception of the individual: if Reality appears as the above-mentioned delusion of body, speech and mind, as suffering and transmigration, that depends exclusively on the lack of recognition of the Way of Being of one's Ultimate Nature.

[In this respect we will mention that the 'Klior lo bzhi sbrags \(The Four Wheels Combined\), a text belonging to the cycle of the rDzogs pa then po Zhang:hungsnayan rgyud,²¹" elaborates these notions by describing how the phenomenal and pure dimensions, as well as living creatures, their sensory and physical aggregates, passions and so on, come respectively into being from each of the five elements \('byung ba Inga\), space, wind, fire, water and earth. The essence of the five elements is said to be light, which represents, as we have seen, the specific dynamic potential of Primordial Wisdom.²⁰ Further, the 'Khor to bzhi sbrags also contains a metaphor which we deem relevant to the present discussion; referring in passing to a 'King of Self-Knowledge' \(rang shes rig gi rgyal po\), the text states :](#)²⁰¹

*sNang ba gsum dang /
rang shes rig gi rgyal po zung du 'brel pas... //*

[The three appearances and the King of Self-Knowledge are interrelated ...](#)
[217](#)

*Tshe 'dir bla mas ngo sprad pas sgra 'od zer gsum rang snang yin par shes /
rang shes rig gi rgyal po'i gnas lugs mngon par shes so //*

[Having received the teacher's introduction during this life, one has the precognition \(of\) sound, light \(and\) rays as being one's \(own\) appearance, \(and\) one has the precognition \(of\) the Way of Being of the King of Self-Knowledge="](#)

[In our opinion, if we take rang slut's in rang slit's rig gi rgyal po as a contraction of rang' snang yin par sires \(known as being one's own appearance\), the expression 'King of Self-Knowledge' could also be interpreted as a](#)

[condensed technical description of the Mind-itself, focused on Awareness as its inborn, determinant qualification .21](#)

In order to be able to actualize the understanding of one's Ultimate Nature, to become 'the King of Self-Knowledge', one has to be introduced by a qualified teacher to the principles of the View and integrate them with one's own existence by practising methods that will allow one to acquire deeper and deeper familiarity with the state of the Great Perfection. Without such integration, the mere knowledge of one's Nature as being that of Primordial Enlightenment is quite useless (go)ni chod pa), particularly during the intermediate state, the most crucial moment when one will have the opportunity to eventually perceive one's Nature and be released from the relative condition, or else fall back again into duality. As it is said:

Grol 'khrul gnyis kyi so mtshams ni bar do la thug pa'o //

[It is in the intermediate state \(that\) the border between deliverance \(and\) delusion is reached."](#)

[The most important and distinctive practices reputed to promote real understanding of the state of the Great Perfection are those of khri'gs shod and thod rgal. The first is said to be practised in order to dissolve the rigidity of one's dualistic perception, and to learn to integrate one's Awareness with all aspects of one's life and being, without necessarily striving to perform any specially devised meditation or assuming any specific form of behaviour. The second implies, at least in its first stages, specific physical postures and ways of gazing; it is practised in order to overcome one's dualistic perception by concretely realizing the Ultimate Nature of the Mind-itself through the arising of visions;"](#)
[the practice of thod rgal is also said to represent a preparation for dealing with the different manifestations that will appear during the intermediate state.²¹² As a result of having performed these practices during one's lifetime, the rDzogs chen pa, the follower of the Great Perfection, should be able to achieve the Fruit of his or her realization after death. In particular, those individuals who are endowed with excellent spiritual capacity \(dbang po rab\) will attain liberation \(char pa\) without having to go through the intermediate state. L1'](#) They will show their realization in the form of the so-called rainbow body ('ja' lus),²¹⁴ [a process through which the aggregates of the physical body will progressively be reabsorbed into the essence of the five elements, that is to say light, so as to eventually disappear altogether, leaving only hair and nails behind."](#)

Part Two:

**THE TWELVE LITTLE TANTRAS
FROM THE
ZHANG ZHUNG AURAL
TRANSMISSION
OF THE GREAT PERFECTION**

NOTE TO THE CRITICAL EDITION OF THE RGYUD BU CHUNG BCU GNYIS

The text used as the basis for this critical edition is that contained in the section marked with key-letter Ca in the rDzogs pa chen po zhang zhung snyan rgyud, History and Doctrine of Bon-po Nispanna-Yoga-a reproduction of a xylographic edition made from the blocks of sMan ri monastery, and published by Lokesh Chandra and Tenzin Namdak as vol. 73 of the Satapitaka Series, International Academy of Indian Culture, New Delhi, 1968 (ff. 1-6, pp. 169-179; marginal title: rGyud bu chung; first folio, 1 line (title); second folio, 5 lines; remaining folios, 6 lines; dhu then script).'

The text has been collated with:

- the rDzogs pa chen po zhang zhung snyan rgyud las rGyud bu chung bcu gnyis, contained in the rDzogs pa then po zhang zhung snyan rgyud kyi gsung pod,2 (section marked with key-letter Ca, ff. 16, pp. 231-241; marginal title: rGyud bu chung; first folio, 1 line (title); second folio, 5 lines; remaining folios, 6 lines; dbu then script);
- the rDzogs pa chew po zaang zhung suyau rgyud kyi Ita ba spyi gcod kyi rtsa ha'iglad don rGyud bu cliung hcu gnyis, contained in the first and second reprint of the Bonpo Canon' (section marked with key-letter Nga, ff. 1-9, pp. 98-106; marginal title: sPyi gcod; first folio, 1 line, recto (title), 5 lines, verso; ff. 2-8, 7 lines; folio 9, recto, 3 lines; dhu fined script);
- theg.Yung drung tshig rkaiig hcu guyis, contained in the rDzogs pa clien po zaang zliung snyan rgyud cycle, manuscript originating from Dolpo, Nepal, from the Snellgrove collection preserved at the British Library, Oriental and India Office Collections (ff. 1-10, no page numbering;2 marginal title: Tshig rkang; first folio, 1 line, recto (title), 7 lines, verso; ff. 2-9, 8 lines; folio 10, recto, 4 lines; dhu med script).'

LEGENDA:'

ZN 169,1:

ZN = *rDzogs pa chen po zhang zhung snyan rgyud*

169 = page number

1 = line number

SP 231:

SP = *rDzogs pa chen po zhang zhung snyan rgyud kyi gsung pod*

23 = page number

KS 9Ra:

KS = versions contained in the first and second reprint of
the Bonpo *bKa' 'gyur*

98 = page number

a/b = recto/verso

TK la:

TK = *g.Yung drung tshig rkang bcu gnyis*, text preserved at the British Library

1 = page number

a/b = recto/verso

① = line starting point in ZN

[231] = page starting point in SP

(98a/b) = folio recto/verso starting point in KS

(1a/b) = folio recto/verso starting point in TK

> < = in text addenda

() = in text corrigenda

? = unclear reading

om. = omission, omitted

incl. = inclusion, included

*** = missing

ego = presumed reading reconstituted by us when the manuscript is unclear

Notes appearing in the Tibetan text are written in italics and are kept within parentheses in the main body of the critical edition. They are also written in italics but kept within square brackets in the translation.

Verses are separated by a double slash differences in the separation of the verses among the various versions are reported in the notes.

Sentences that are too long to be kept on one line are split into two parts and do not carry any separation mark (/).

Verses are counted by five in both the critical edition and translation; the latter carries the page numbering of ZN, which was chosen as the basis for the critical edition.

When the syllables of a verse are contextually linked through a series of dots, or are treated as separate verses altogether, that will be reflected accordingly in note after the separation mark.

With respect to the translation, we have adopted a better reading in the critical edition whenever deemed suitable, indicating in the notes the readings of the texts examined.

All contracted /hidden words (bsdus yig/skung yig) have been resolved in the transliteration. We would like to remark that whenever the da log dra sign (~) is used in place of the consonant-group -gs, the Tshig rkarng hcu gjiyis erroneously shows another sa written after that sign. Since reporting this orthographic peculiarity every time would have made the critical edition unnecessarily cumbersome, we have preferred to mention it here.

CRITICAL EDITION AND ANNOTATED TRANSLATION

ZN Ca 169,1,
SP Ca 231,
KS Nga 98a,¹
TK Ja, 1a²

ZN 170,1, ① [232] [98b] (1b)³ zhang zhung smrar⁴ gyi skad du na //
 SP 232, Ī⁵ thi ku yig khri rtse u pa tan tra thad do ci //
 KS 98b, bod skad du //
 TK 1b rdzogs pa chen po byang chub sems kyi gnad byang //
 thig le nyag gcig e ma ho //

(ZN 169,1) **The Twelve Little Tantras, from the Zhang Zhung Aural Transmission of the Great Perfection.¹**

(ZN 170,1) In the language of Zhang Zhung *smrar*,²
Ī thi ku yig khri rtse u pa tan tra thad do ci.³
 In Tibetan, Great Perfection, the focal-point⁴ of the Pure-
 and-Perfect-Mind.
 Single Essence. *E ma ho*!⁵

ZN 170,2 kun tu¹ bzang po ② rang 'byung rig pa'i lha la phyag
 'tshal lo //

1/2 'di skad bdag gis bstan³ pa'i dus cig⁴ na //
gnas 'og min bon nyid kyi dbyings na //

- KS 99a 2/⁵ ye nyid kyi ston (99a) pa kun tu⁶ bzang po //
 cir yang mtshon du⁷ dka' ste // 5
- ZN 170,3,
 TK 2a gdod (2a) nas brjod med ③ chen por bzhugs so⁸ //
 de'i ngang las⁹ //
 thugs rje'i ston pa kun tu¹⁰ bzang po //
 thugs rje¹¹ kun la snyoms¹² par bzhugs so¹³ //
- (ZN 170,2) Homage to Kun tu bZang po, the deity of Self-Originated
 Awareness!¹

1.² With these words I³ expressed myself at one time⁴
 in 'Og min,⁵ the Dimension of Reality.

2. The Primordial Teacher Kun tu bZang po,
 difficult to be defined in whatever way, 5
- (ZN 170,3) abides from the origin in (the state of) great ineffability.
 From the Condition of That,
 the Compassionate Teacher Kun tu bZang po
 equally extends (his) compassion towards all.

thugs nyid ma g.yos pa'i ngang las¹ //
 g.yo ba ye shes² kyi cho 'phrul du //
 ZN 170,4 sems can gzhan la ④ tshad med pa'i snying rje³ shar ro //
 tshad med pa'i snying rje des //
 sems can thams cad la phyogs dang ris med par
 khyab par⁴ gyur⁵ to⁶ //⁷ 5
 snying rje de nyid thugs rje'i bdag nyid du
 sangs rgyas pa'i rtags su //
 sprul pa'i ston pa gshen lha 'od dkar //⁸
 ZN 170,5 ⑤ chu zla'i dkyil 'khor ltar gsal la 'tsher ba //
 sku snang la rang bzhin med pa //
 mtshan dang dpe byad yongs su rdzogs pa // 10
 'khor dang zhing khams dang bcas par gyur te //

From the Condition of the immovable Mind-itself,
 as the miracle of active Primordial Wisdom,
 (ZN 170,4) immeasurable loving kindness shines forth for other beings.
 That immeasurable loving kindness
 encompasses all sentient beings without partiality or
 inclination. 5
 That very loving kindness, which is the texture of
 compassion, the token of Enlightenment,
 (took the form of) the Emanated Teacher gShen lha
 'Od dkar;
 (ZN 170,5) shining clearly like the moon disk (reflected in) water,
 (his) bodily appearance has no (inherent) nature;
 fully perfected (in) signs and attributes, 10
 (he) revealed himself with (his) retinue and (his) pure
 field.

de'i thugs rje'i¹ 'od zer las //
 ZN 171,1, SP 233 thugs rje ma 'gags² pa'i ① [233] rtsal du //
 TK 2b rig pa 'od kyi khye'u (2b) chung zhes kyang³ bya //
 KS 99b ⁴gshen tshad med 'od ldan zhes bya ba {99b} byung
 ste⁵ // ⁶
 ye ci⁷ bzhin ma'i sangs rgyas rig pa rang snang can
 dang thabs cig⁸ tu⁹ bzhugs so¹⁰ // ¹¹ 5
 3/¹² de'i tshe (*cir yang sprul pa'i ston pa*)¹³ gshen tshad
 med 'od ldan gyis //
 ZN 171,2 ② ston pa la bla na med pa'i mchod pa phul te //
 thugs kyi¹⁴ mdzod bskul¹⁵ nas zhus pa //

From the rays of his compassion,
 (ZN 171,1) as the potential of unobstructed compassion,
 gShen Tshad med 'Od ldan,
 also called Rig pa 'Od kyi Khye'u chung, appeared;
 (he) abides as one
 with the Primordially Enlightened One, endowed with
 self-seeing Awareness.¹ 5

3. At that time gShen Tshad med 'Od ldan
 [*the teacher who reveals himself in all sorts of ways*]
 (ZN 171,2) made supreme offerings to the Teacher,² (and)
 driven from the bottom of (his) heart implored:

ston pa thugs rje'i¹ mnga' bdag lags //
 'gro ba thugs rjes bzung slad du //
 nyon mongs 'khrul pa'i sems can rnam //
 ZN 171,3 ③ ma rig mun pas bsgribs² pa la //
 rang rig ye shes bstan³ tu⁴ gsol //
 ces⁵ zhus pas // 5

2/⁶ ston pa nyid kyis bka' stsal⁷ pa // ⁸
 (kun tu⁹ bzang pos tshig tu¹⁰ rdul¹¹ tsam yang gsung¹²
 pa med de¹³ //
 ting nge 'dzin dgongs pa'i¹⁴ ngang nas gsungs so)¹⁵ // ¹⁶

"Oh Teacher, Lord of Compassion,
 on account of the compassion with which (You) look upon
 living beings,
 to sentient beings deluded (by) afflictions (and)
 (ZN 171,3) blinded by the darkness (of) non-awareness
 please show the Primordial Wisdom of Self-Awareness!" 5
 Having thus implored,

2. the Teacher himself proclaimed:

[(this) *is not in the least* (to be considered as) *a verbal*
expression by Kun tu bZang po, (since)
it is spoken from the condition of meditative contemplation]

rang 'byung ka¹ dag ye sangs rgyas //
 TK 3a bon dang (3a) bon can thams cad kyang² //
 ZN 171,4 rang gi sems yin gzhan ④ min³ pas //
 thams cad rang 'byung nyid du ltos⁴ //
 zhes⁵ gsung⁶ pas // 5

'khor rnam rang rig pa'i ye shes rang las⁷ shar te //
 ZN 171,5 rang 'byung gi⁸ ye shes rang gis rtogs ⑤ par gyur to // ⁹

yang gsungs¹⁰ pa //

“Self-originated, Primordial Enlightenment pure from the
beginning,
the state of being and all phenomena
(ZN 171,4) are one’s (own) Mind, (they) are not (something) else;
therefore,
look at everything as (being) the Self-Originated!”

Having thus spoken (he added): 5

“Retinue, when the Primordial Wisdom of Self-Awareness
has appeared in oneself,
(ZN 171,5) the Self-Originated Primordial Wisdom will be naturally
perceived.”

Further (he) said:

¹ཀླུ་རྒྱལ་རྒྱ་མཚོ་ལྷ་མོ་ལྷ་མོ་ལྷ་མོ་ //

(g.yung drung tshig rkang bcu gnyis kyi mdor bstan³) //

ཀླུ་རྒྱལ་རྒྱ་མཚོ་ལྷ་མོ་ལྷ་མོ་ལྷ་མོ་ //

ཀླུ་རྒྱལ་རྒྱ་མཚོ་ལྷ་མོ་ལྷ་མོ་ལྷ་མོ་ //

²ཀླུ་རྒྱལ་རྒྱ་མཚོ་ལྷ་མོ་ལྷ་མོ་ལྷ་མོ་ // 5

ZN 172,1, ³ཀླུ་རྒྱལ་རྒྱ་མཚོ་ལྷ་མོ་ལྷ་མོ་ལྷ་མོ་ //
SP 234

KS 100a ⁴ཀླུ་རྒྱལ་རྒྱ་མཚོ་ལྷ་མོ་ལྷ་མོ་ལྷ་མོ་ //

[\[Outline of the twelve everlasting verses\]](#)

Ka. "The Basis of all (is) pristine Self-Awareness.

Kha. The Path (is) spontaneously perfected, without progression (and) without effort.

Ga. The Fruit is spontaneously accomplished as it is.

Nga. There is nothing to investigate with respect to the real sense.

5

(ZN 172,1) **Ca.** There is nothing to meditate with respect to the real sense.

Cha. There is no conduct (to be adopted) with respect to the real sense.

ཇ། sems kyi dpe ni nam mkha' 'dra //

ཉ། sems kyi rtags ni sems nyid yin //

ཏ། sems kyi don ni bon nyid do //

ཐ། skye¹ ba² med pa'i bon dbyings na³ //

ZN 172,2 ཏ། 'gag pa⁴ med⁵ pa'i ye shes ཅ gnas //

5

TK 3b ཐ། skye 'gag gnyis med (3b) thig le gcig //

gleng⁶ gzhi'i⁷ le'u 'o⁸ //⁹

Ja. The example for the Mind is (that it is) like the sky.

Nya. The token for the Mind is the Mind-itself.

Ta. The meaning¹ of the Mind is the Reality.

Tha. In the unborn Dimension (of) Reality,

(ZN 172,2) **Da.** Unobstructed Primordial Wisdom abides. 5

Na. Single Essence without birth and interruption."²

This is the basic chapter.³

byang sems thig le nyag gcig e ma ho //¹

ཀྟེེ²

(*rgyas par bstan*³ *te*⁴ *bshad*⁵ *pa la*)⁶ //

*sems nyid stong pa ka*⁷ *nas*⁸ *dag* //

*sems nyid stong pa 'od du*⁹ *gsal* //

*'od gsal stong pa gdod nas dag*¹⁰ // 5

ZN 172,3 ③ *'khor 'das gnyis kyi gzhi mar*¹¹ *gyur* //

'khor 'das gnyis su gyes pa med //

de nyid rang bzhin med par shes //

rtogs pas kun bzang ye sangs rgyas //

de ma yin la der bzung nas // 10

Pure-(and-Perfect-)Mind, Single Essence. *E ma ho!*

Ka. [*The extended explanation:*]

"The Mind-itself (is) empty, (it is) pure from the beginning.
The Mind-itself, (which is) empty, shines forth as light.¹
(This) Clear Light, (which is) empty, (is) pure from the
beginning. 5

(ZN 172,3) (It) becomes the Basis of transmigration and the state
transcending suffering.
There is no separation between transmigration and the
state transcending suffering.
Know (that) That itself has no (inherent) nature!
Realizing (That) is Kun (tu) bZang (po), (the state of)
Primordial Enlightenment;
Although (it) is not that, it is grasped as that;² 10

ZN 172,4 bzung 'dzin gnyis su spyad pa yis¹ //
ma rtogs sems can 'khor ④ bar 'khyams //
lam lnga rgyu² drug so so dang //
sku dang zhing kham thams cad dang //
'khor ba dang ni³ myang 'das gnyis // 5
thams cad byang chub sems las byung //
nyon mongs dug lnga⁴ nga yi sems //
dug lnga spangs pa'i pha⁵ rol na //
ZN 172,5 sangs rgyas bya ba'i⁶ ⑤ ming yang med //
TK 4a dug lnga ye nas rnam⁷ (4a) par dag // 10
KS 100b ye shes lnga'i rang bzhin (100b) yin //
rang 'byung thig le nyag gcig e ma ho //⁸

Kha

(As to) that which is the essential characteristic of the
Mind,

(it has) to be explained in a correct and certain way:
the Pure-and-Perfect-Mind is without primary and
instrumental causes.

- (ZN 172,6) The Pure-and-Perfect-Mind is untainted (and) unaltered.
The Pure-and-Perfect-Mind is inexpressible. 5
The Pure-and-Perfect-Mind is without birth and death.
The Body of (the Pure-and-Perfect-)Mind is without
definitions;
the Speech of (the Pure-and-Perfect-)Mind is without
inherent nature;
the Mind of (the Pure-and-Perfect-)Mind is without
characterization;

- sems kyi yon tan mi zad¹ pa² //
ZN 173,1, sems kyi phrin³ las ① [235] lhun gyis⁴ grub //
SP 235 lhun grub sems la 'bad rtsol med //
rtsol ba⁵ byas pas⁶ sangs rgyas men⁷ //
tshig gi⁸ lam dang don gyi⁹ lam // 5
tshig gi¹⁰ lam gyis¹¹ don la sbyor //
don gyi¹² lam la bgrod¹³ du med //
bgrod¹⁴ med¹⁵ rtsol bral lhun la¹⁶ rdzogs //
ZN 173,2 rtsol ② bral thig le nyag gcig e ma ho //¹⁷

the Qualities of (the Pure-and-Perfect-)Mind (are)
inexhaustible;

(ZN 173,1) the Activity of (the Pure-and-Perfect-)Mind (is) spontaneously accomplished.

There is no effort (to be undertaken) with respect to the
spontaneously accomplished (Pure-and-Perfect-)Mind;
if effort is undertaken, (it) is not the Enlightened (state).

(With respect to) the path of words and the path of the
(real) sense,

5

the path of words (is that which) prepares for the sense;
as to the path of the (real) sense, (that is) without
progression.

Without progression, without effort, spontaneously
perfected.

(ZN 173,2) Single Essence without effort. *E ma ho!*

གྲྀ¹

TK 4b sems nyid gdod nas ye sangs rgyas //
dang po'i² ye shes rgyu med (4b) pas³ //
rgyu las skye⁴ pa'i⁵ ye shes min⁶ //
rang gsal ye shes nyag gcig ma //
kun tu⁷ bzang po⁸ thugs nyid yin⁹ //

5

ZN 173,3 sangs rgyas sems can ③ kun la khyab //
'das dang ma byung¹⁰ da ltar¹¹ gsum //
rtogs¹² pa snga phyi'i khyad par las //
dus gsum gcig ste¹³ khyad par med //

Ga

The Mind-itself (is) from the origin Primordial
Enlightenment.

The original Wisdom is without cause,
(it) is not Wisdom generated by causes.

(This) single Wisdom (that is) clear (to) itself
is the very Heart (of) Kun tu bZang po.¹

5

(ZN 173,3) (It) encompasses all enlightened (and) sentient beings,
past, future and present.

(It is) beyond the distinction of before (and) after
realization.²

The three times are one, there is no differentiation.

KS 101a [101a] byang chub sems la¹ rgyu med pas //
rgyu las² skyes³ pa'i⁴ 'bras bu min⁵ //
rtsol bral nam mkha' lta bur gnas //

ZN 173,4 sems ④ nyid nor bu rin po che⁶ //
gzhan nas btsal⁷ bas mi rnyed de⁸ //
sams kyis⁹ sems la¹⁰ btsal¹¹ bar bya //
btsal bas rnyed par mi 'gyur te¹² //
ma btsal¹³ bar¹⁴ yang stor bral med //

5

The Pure-and-Perfect-Mind is without cause,
(it) is not an effect produced by causes;
(it) exists without effort, like the sky.

(ZN 173,4) The precious jewel (of) the Mind-itself
is not found by looking (for it) elsewhere;

5

(it is) to be looked for in the mind by the mind.
(But) when (it is) looked for, (it) will not appear;
(and) when (it is) not looked for, (it) won't be lost either.

rgyu med 'bras bu byang chub sems //
 ZN 173,5 rtsol bral nam mkha' lta bu'i ⑤ don //
 rtogs shing¹ khong du² chud gyur³ na //
 de dag mthar phyin brtan⁴ pa thob //
 'bras bu kun tu bdag nyid yin // 5
 dang po'i⁵ sangs rgyas rgyu med pas⁶ //
 rgyu las byung ba'i⁷ sangs rgyas min⁸ //
 TK 5a (5a) gdod ma nyid nas ye sangs rgyas //
 ZN 173,6 sku gsum rang 'byung ⑥ lhun gyis⁹ grub //
 lhun grub thig le nyag gcig e ma ho //¹⁰ 10

The Pure-and-Perfect-Mind, the Fruit without cause,
 (ZN 173,5) (is) the state (that exists) without effort like the sky.
 Realizing (that), taking (it) to heart, (and)
 bringing those¹ to ultimate stability
 is the substance (of) all realizations. 5
 The original Enlightenment is without cause,
 (it) is not Enlightenment generated by causes;
 (it is) Primordial Enlightenment from the very beginning.
 (ZN 173,6) The Three Bodies (are) self-originated (and) spontane-
 ously accomplished.
 Spontaneously accomplished Single Essence. *E ma ho!* 10

སྒྲུབ་¹
 snang srid 'khor 'das thams cad kun //
 thams cad byang chub sems su rdzogs //
 de phyir rdzogs pa chen po yin //
 rdzogs chen zab mo'i don la lta //
 ZN 174,1, 'di zhes bya bar lta ru ① [236] med // 5
 SP 236 bltas² pas mthong bar³ mi 'gyur te⁴ //
 ma mthong pa nyid⁵ mthong ba'i⁶ mchog⁷ //

Nga

All appearance (and) coming into being, transmigration
(and) the state transcending suffering,
everything (is) perfected in the Pure-and-Perfect-Mind.
For that reason (it) is (called) Great Perfection.

(ZN 174,1) To look at the profound state (of) the Great Perfection
is not investigating (and thinking) "this (is it)." 5
Since by investigating (it) will not be seen,
not seeing itself (is) the best seeing.

kun tu¹ bzang po'i lta ba ni //
'di zhes bya bar ma gsung² ste //
KS 101b cir³ yang {101b} 'char zhing⁴ cir yang snang //
gang yin gang min⁵ cir⁶ yang min //
ZN 174,2 byang sems ka⁷ dag 'dus ma ② byas // 5
rgya chad phyogs lhung ris⁸ chad sogs⁹ //
mu bzhi gang gi¹⁰ mthas¹¹ ma reg //

As to the View of Kun tu bZang po,
(it) cannot be explained as "this (is it)";
(as) coming forth in this way or appearing in that way,
(as) being this way, not being that way (or) being nothing
at all:¹

(ZN 174,2) the Pure-(and-Perfect-)Mind (is) pure from the beginning,
(it is) uncompounded. 5
(It is) unaffected by the extremes of the four limits,²
(by) any connotation, partiality or inclination;

tha dad rtag par 'dzin¹ pa dang //
 stong pa phyal² chad 'dzin pa³ dang //
 TK 5b (5b) bzung⁴ 'dzin gnyis su lta ba⁵ dang //
 rol pa'i snang ba⁶ bkag pas chad //
 ZN 174,3 mtha' bral⁷ dbu ma'i don ③ 'dzin pa // 5
 mtha' bzhi gsal ba'i dgongs pa'o //⁸
 mtha' bral chen po lta ba'i mchog //
 'di ni lta ba'i rgyal po ste //
 spyi gcod⁹ kun gyi thun¹⁰ mong¹¹ min¹² //
 mtha'¹³ bral thig le nyag gcig e ma ho //¹⁴ 10

(it is) cut off (from) conceiving the various (phenomena)
 as eternal,¹

(from) conceiving univocal² emptiness,³

(from) viewing grasping and grasped as two,⁴

(from) the appearance of manifestation.

(ZN 174,3) (It) seizes the central point without extremes; 5
 it is contemplation free (from) the four limits.

This 'great separation from extremes' (is) the best View,

(it) is the king of (all) views,

(it) is not a view customary to everyone.⁵

Single Essence without extremes. *E ma ho!* 10

མ།

rdzogs chen zab mo'i don la sgom¹ //
 ZN 174,4 'di ④ zhes bya ba² sgom³ du med //
 sgom⁴ pas gsal bar mi 'gyur te⁵ //
 ma sgom⁶ par yang gsal 'grib⁷ med //
 kun tu⁸ bzang po'i⁹ dgongs pa ni // 5
 so ma rang lugs ma bcos pa¹⁰ //
 ma bcos gnyug ma'i¹¹ rang sa zin //
 sgom¹² du med cing yengs su med //

- (ZN 174,4) **Ca**
 Meditation referred to the profound state (of) the Great
 Perfection
 is not meditating (and thinking) "this (is it)."
 Through meditation, (it) doesn't get clear;
 without meditation, (it is) neither cleared nor obscured.
 The contemplation of Kun tu bZang po 5
 (is) fresh, natural (and) unaltered;
 (it is) to remain in one's pristine, unaltered condition,
 without meditating and wandering.
- ZN 174,5 ⑤ sgom du med pa'i sems nyid la //
 yengs su med pa'i gzer gyis¹ btab² //
 rang rig gsal stong 'du 'bral med //
- TK 6a 'khor 'das (6a) gnyis med mnyam par gnas //
- KS 102a (102a) gnyug ma'i ngang³ thag rgyun mi bcad // 5
 sgom⁴ du med pa sgom⁵ pa'i mchog //
- ZN 174,6 sgom⁶ med ⑥ thig le nyag gcig⁷ e ma ho //⁸
- (ZN 174,5) The Mind-itself, which is not (something to be) meditated
 upon,
 is hit by the nail of non-wandering.¹
 (In) Self-Awareness, clarity (and) emptiness are neither
 separated nor unified.
 Transmigration (and) the state transcending suffering are
 not two, (they) exist in equality.
 There is no interruption (in) the continuum (of) the
 pristine Condition. 5
 The best meditation (is) without meditation.
- (ZN 174,6) Single Essence without meditation. *E ma ho!*

ཨ།¹

rdzogs chen zab mo'i don la spyad //

'di zhes bya bar² spyad du med //

lta sgom ma³ dang ma bral bar //

skye med spros⁴ bral chen po la //

'bral med spyod pa spyod pa yin //

5

bcos pa'i spyod pa spyod pa min⁵ //

ZN 175,1,
SP 237

ma bcos dgag⁶ ① [237] sgrub⁷ med pa ru //

lta spyod zung du 'brel ba⁸ na //

rol pa'i spyod pa rdzogs chen rgyan //

ji⁹ ltar spyad kyang rnam par dag //

10

padma bzhin du skyon ma gos //

blang dor med pa spyod pa'i mchog //

spyod mchog thig le nyag gcig e ma ho //¹⁰

Cha

To conduct oneself with respect to the profound state (of)
the Great Perfection

is not to behave (in some way, thinking) "this (is it)."

Without being separated from the View (and) Meditation,
totally spontaneous (and) undiversified,
the 'unseparated' conduct is the (real) one; 5
an artificial conduct is not (the real) one.

(ZN 175,1) When View (and) conduct (are) inseparably coordinated
in (a way
that is) not artificial (and) devoid of forbidding and
allowing,
(all) manifested conduct¹ (becomes) the ornament of the
Great Perfection;
in whatever way (it) is pursued, (it is) pure; 10
like a lotus, (it) wears no stains.
Absence (of) acceptance and rejection (is) the best conduct.
Best conduct, Single Essence. *E ma ho!*

ཇ།

ZN 175,2 byang chub sems ni ② dpe'i mtshon //
dpe'i¹ nam mkha' 'dus² ma byas //
nam mkha' stong pa'i ngang nyid las //
TK 6b gzha' sprin (6b) khu rlangs sna tshogs dang //
ci yang 'char zhing³ cir yang snang // 5
nam mkha'i ngang du gnas shing⁴ thim⁵ //
mtha' dbus mdog⁶ dbyibs phyogs ris bral //
ZN 175,3 yang dag ③ don la mtshon du med //
KS 102b mtshon bral thig le nyag gcig {102b} e ma ho //⁷

Ja

- (ZN 175,2) The example illustrating the Pure-and-Perfect-Mind
(is that of) the uncompounded sky:
from the condition of the empty sky,
the various rainbows, clouds, haze,
whatever comes forth and however it appears, 5
exists and dissolves in the condition of the sky.
Without partiality (and) inclination, form, colour, centre
(or) borders,
(ZN 175,3) the real sense (is) without definition.
Single Essence without definitions. *E ma ho!*

91

- byang chub sems kyi gtan¹ tshigs² ni //
dman³ pa'i sems kyis⁴ mi shes te⁵ //
gtan⁶ tshigs⁷ gsum gyis⁸ shes par bya'o⁹ //
ngang dang rang bzhin bdag nyid gsum //
ngang ni rig pa cir¹⁰ yang gsal // 5
ZN 175,4 ④ rang bzhin rig pa cir¹¹ yang stong //
bdag nyid gsal stong gnyis su med //
bdag nyid chen po'i gtan¹² tshigs¹³ kyis¹⁴ //
thams cad byang¹⁵ chub sems su shes //

Nya

As to the cause (of being)¹ of the Pure-and-Perfect-Mind:
since the inferior mind does not know (it),
(it) has to be made known by way of the three causes (of
being).

(These are) the Condition and the Nature (and) the
Identity.

With respect to the Condition, Awareness (is) clear in all
sorts of ways.

5

(ZN 175,4) (With respect to) the (Ultimate) Nature, Awareness (is)
empty in whatsoever way;

The Identity (is the Awareness that) the clear (and) the
empty do not exist as a duality.²

Through the cause (of being) of the Great Identity
everything is known as the Pure-and-Perfect-Mind.³

sems nyid stong pa rtsa bral la //

sems dang sems 'byung¹ ci shar yang //

sems nyid ngang du gnas shing² thim³ //

ZN 175,5 ⑤ sems nyid bzung⁴ 'dzin mtha' dang bral //

mkha' la nyi ma shar ba 'dra //

5

gsal stong zung 'jug dbye ru med //

TK 6bis/a (6bis/a) dbyer med thig le nyag gcig e ma ho //⁵

The Mind-itself (is) empty, (it is) without root; in that
 respect,
 the mind and all mental creations
 exist and dissolve in the Condition (of) the Mind-itself;
 (ZN 175,5) the Mind-itself (is) without limits (of) grasping (and)
 grasped.
 Like the sun shining in the sky, 5
 the clear (and) the empty (are) unified, there is no
 separation.
 Inseparable Single Essence. *E ma ho!*

༥།
 don dam bon nyid skye ba med //
 skye ba med pa'i bon dbyings nas //
 bon dang bon can thams cad kyang¹ //
 (ZN 175,6) ci² yang 'char ⑥ zhing³ cir yang snang //
 bon nyid ngang du gnas shing⁴ thim // 5
 bon nyid don la skye 'gag med //
 bon nyid don la phyogs ris med //
 bon nyid don la brjod du med //
 brjod⁵ bral thig le nyag gcig e ma ho //⁶

ཁ།
 dbyings dang ye shes mtshan nyid ni // 10
 dbyings (103a) ni dag pa'i rgyu yin te⁷ //
 (KS 103a) ① [238] bon nyid dbyings la skye ba med //⁸
 (ZN 176,1, SP 238)

51

ye shes 'bras bu nyid du gsal //
'od gsal ye shes 'gag pa med //⁹

Ta

The Absolute Reality (is) unborn.

From the Dimension of unborn Reality,
the state of being and all phenomena,

(ZN 175,6) whatever comes forth and however (it) appears,
exists and dissolves in the Condition (of) Reality. 5

The state (of) Reality (is) without birth (and) interruption.

The state (of) Reality (is) without partiality (and) inclination.

The state (of) Reality (is) ineffable.

Ineffable Single Essence. *E ma ho!*

Tha

The essential characteristics (of) Dimension and
Primordial Wisdom:

10

(ZN 176,1) the Dimension is the pure cause,
the unborn Dimension (of) Reality.

Da

Primordial Wisdom shines forth as the intrinsic effect,
the uninterrupted Primordial Wisdom (of) Clear Light.

ཁ།

skye 'gag gnyis med thig le gcig //

thig le nyag gcig bon gyi sku //

bon gyi sku la mtshon¹ du med //

mtshon med ngang las² ye shes shar //

ZN 176,2, stong nyid ② ye shes phyogs ris (6bis/b) med //

5

TK 6bis/b me long ye shes gsal sgrib³ med //

mnyam nyid ye shes mthon⁴ dman med //

sor rtogs ye shes ma 'dres gsal //

bya grub ye shes lhun gyis⁵ grub //

Na

Single Essence without birth and interruption.

Single Essence, Body of Reality.

The Body of Reality (is) undefinable.

From the undefinable Condition, Primordial Wisdom
shines forth

(ZN 176,2) (as) the Wisdom of Emptiness, (which is) without
partiality (and) inclination;

5

(as) the Mirror(-like) Wisdom, (which is) without clarity
(and) obscuration;

(as) the Wisdom of Equality, (which has) no high (or) low;

(as) the Discriminating Wisdom, (which) shines forth
unmixed;

(as) the Accomplishing Wisdom (that) spontaneously
achieves.

1ye shes lnga ldan longs spyod rdzogs //
 rgyan dang cha lugs mtshan dpe² ldan //
 ZN 176,3 ③ 'khor dang zhing khams lhun gyis³ grub //
 rdzogs pa'i sku las⁴ thugs rje⁵ shar //
 gang la gang 'dul sprul par⁶ ston // 5
 sna tshogs sprul skus⁷ 'gro don mdzad //
 sku gsum rang bzhin lhun la rdzogs //
 sku gsum lhun rdzogs chen po las⁸ //
 ZN 176,4 sangs rgyas gzhan nas ④ bsgrub⁹ tu¹⁰ med //

The Five Wisdom Holders (are endowed with) Perfect
 Enjoyment,
 with attires and ornaments, signs (and) attributes,
 (ZN 176,3) spontaneously accomplished retinues and pure fields.
 From the Body of Perfection compassion shines forth,
 miraculously displaying (itself to) whoever needs to be
 tamed. 5
 (In) various (ways,) the Emanated Bodies perform the
 benefit (of) beings.
 The nature (of) the Three Bodies (is) spontaneous
 perfection.
 Apart from the great, spontaneous perfection (of) the
 Three Bodies,
 (ZN 176,4) Enlightenment cannot be achieved from elsewhere.

gsas mkhar lhun rdzogs chen po la //
 bskyed¹ bya skyed² byed ci yang med //
 bon nyid lhun rdzogs chen po la //
 rdzogs bya rdzogs byed ci yang med //
 KS 103b dam (103b) tshig ye bsrung³ chen po la // 5
 bsrung⁴ bya srung⁵ byed ci yang med //
 ZN 176,5 ye dbang sems la rdzogs ⑤ pa la //
 TK 7a dbang ni⁶ thob⁷ bya⁸ (7a) thob byed med //

In the great, spontaneous perfection (of) the gSas mkhar
 (deities),¹

(there is) no one (that) generates (and) nothing (to be)
 generated.²

In the great, spontaneous perfection (of) Reality,
 (there is) no one (that) perfects (and) nothing (to be)
 perfected.

In the great commitment observed from the origin, 5
 (there is) no keeper (and) nothing (to be) kept.

(ZN 176,5) In the perfected Mind, empowered from the origin,
 (there is) no empowerment (to be) obtained (and) no one
 (that) obtains (it).

dngos grub rgya mtsho chen po la //
 dngos grub thob¹ bya thob byed med //
 'od gsal lhun rdzogs chen po la //
 sa'i rim pa ci yang med //
 rtsol² bral lhun rdzogs chen po la // 5
 lam gyi rim pa ci yang med //

ZN 176,6 rang 'byung lhun rdzogs chen³ po ⑥ la //
 'bras bu'i⁴ bye brag⁵ ci yang med //
 thams cad rdzogs pa chen po la //
 theg pa'i rim pa ci yang med // 10

In the great ocean (of supernatural) accomplishments,
(there is) no (supernatural) accomplishment (to be)
reached (and) no one (that) reaches (it).

In the great, spontaneous perfection (of) the Clear Light,
(there is) no succession of stages.

In the great, spontaneous perfection without effort, 5
(there is) no graduality of paths.

(ZN 176,6) In the great, self-originated spontaneous perfection,
(there is) no distinction in results.

In the total Great Perfection,
(there is) no succession of vehicles. 10

med pa ma yin snying po'i don //

ngang la¹ ngang gis gnas pa ni //

nor bu chu gdangs bzhin du gsal //²

ngang gsal nyag gcig bri ba³ med //

ZN 177,1, mtha' bral thig ① [239] le nyag gcig yin // 5

SP 239

thig le nyag gcig bon gyi sku //

thams cad bon skur rtogs pa⁴ na //

rin chen gser gling phyin pa 'dra //

phyogs ris med na lta ba yin //

mnyam nyid rtogs na sgom⁵ pa yin // 10

blang dor med na spyod pa yin //

ZN 177,2, TK 7b re ② dogs (7b) med na 'bras bu yin //

KS 104a bzung 'dzin med na rtogs [104a] pa yin⁶ //

It is not non-existence, (that is) the essential meaning.
 (What) naturally exists in the Condition
 shines forth like a jewel in transparent waters.
 The Condition (and) the clear (are) one, there is no
 diminishment.

(ZN 177,1) It is (one) Single Essence without demarcation. 5
 Single Essence, Body of Reality.

When everything is realized as (being) the Body of Reality
 it is like reaching the island of precious gold.¹

When there is no partiality (nor) inclination, (that) is the View.

When equality is realized, (that) is Meditation. 10

When there is no acceptance (nor) rejection, (that) is the
 Conduct.

(ZN 177,2) When there is no hope (nor) apprehension, (that) is the Fruit.

When there is no grasping (nor) grasped, (that) is the
 Realization.

sems nyid rtogs pa'i¹ mal 'byor pa² //
 khyung dang seng³ ge'i bu bzhin du //
 rgya gsum ral nas rtsal gsum rdzogs //
 rtogs pa mngon gyur⁴ sangs rgyas nyid //

ZN 177,3 bsgrub⁵ pa⁶ med par ③ lhun gyis⁷ grub // 5

rtsol ba⁸ med par rang sa zin //
 sangs pa med par nyong mong⁹ sangs //
 rgyas pa med par ye shes rgyas //

phyin pa med par mtha' ru phyin //
 sgrib g.yogs¹⁰ med par thams cad gsal //

10

'das pa med par mya ngan 'das¹¹ //

ZN 177,4 myang ④ 'das thig le nyag gcig e ma ho //¹²

The *rnal 'byor pa*¹ who realizes the Mind-itself
(is) like the offspring of lions and eagles;
when the three seals² come apart,³ the three potentialities⁴
(are already) perfected, (and)
realization reveals itself (as) true Enlightenment.

(ZN 177,3) Spontaneous accomplishment without accomplishing. 5

Effortless remaining in one's place.⁵

Purified afflictions without purification.

Wisdom developed without development.

Perfection attained without perfecting.

Total clarity without obscuration.

10

Suffering transcended without transcendence.

(ZN 177,4) Transcending-of-suffering, Single Essence. *E ma ho!*"

(rgyud kyi che ba brjod¹ pa dang / /

rgyud yongs su gtad pa'o) / /²

(yang ston pas gsungs pa) / /³

	rdzogs pa chen po byang sems thig le nyag gcig 'di //	
	rgyud rnam kun tu rgyal po ste //	5
	lung rnam kun tu rtsa ba yin //	
ZN 177,5	man ngag kun tu ⑤ snying khu yin //	
	brgyad khri bzhi stong mthar thug yin //	
TK 8a	(8a) theg pa dgu'i ⁴ yang rtse yin //	
	kun tu ⁵ bzang po'i dgongs pa ste ⁶ //	10
	dus gsum sangs rgyas thams cad kyis //	
	tshig tu ⁷ rdul ⁸ tsam gsung ⁹ pa med //	
	ma gsung ¹⁰ mi gsung gsung mi ¹¹ 'gyur //	
ZN 177,6	de'i ⑥ phyir yang dkon pa'o // ¹²	

[This is the exposition of the Tantras and their full delivery.]

[Further, the Teacher said:]

	"This Single Essence, Pure-(and-Perfect-)Mind, Great Perfection,	
	is the king of all <i>Tantras</i> ,	5
	the root of all precepts,	
(ZN 177,5)	the pith of all instructions,	
	the finality of the eighty-four thousand (teachings), ¹	
	the summit of the Nine Vehicles.	
	Being the contemplation of Kun tu bZang po,	10
	all enlightened beings (of) the three times	
	are not in the least able to express (it) in words.	
	It was inexpressible, it is inexpressible, it will be inexpressible.	
(ZN 177,6)	For that reason, it is, indeed, valuable.	

KS 104b {104b} ston pa ngas kyang¹ ma bshad de //
 ma bshad mi bshad² bshad mi 'gyur //
 de'i phyir yang dkon pa'o //³
 sems can blo la mi snang ste⁴ //
 nam mkha' rgya mtsho'i tshul bzhin du // 5
 rgya che gting⁵ zab cha phra⁶ bas //
 ZN 178,1, rtogs par⁷ dka' ① [240] zhing rig⁸ par⁹ dkon //
 SP 240 tshig dang yig ger mi bzhugs¹⁰ te¹¹ //
 de'i phyir yang dkon pa'o //¹²
 yid bzhin nor bu rin chen ltar // 10
 dgos 'dod 'byung ste shin tu¹³ dkon //

Even I, the Teacher, could not explain (it).

It was inexplicable, it is inexplicable, it will be inexplicable.

For that reason, it is, indeed, valuable.

It does not appear in the mind (of) sentient beings;

like the ocean or the sky, 5

(it is) vast, profound and subtle;

(ZN 178,1) it is hard to understand and rarely known.

It is not found in words and letters;

for that reason, it is, indeed, valuable.

Like the precious Wish-fulfilling Gem 10

realizing (all) needs and wants, (it is) extremely valuable.¹

	de phyir khyed la gdams par bya //	
	shin tu ¹ gnyan ² cing gces ³ par zungs ⁴ //	
ZN 178,2	rang rig ye ② shes bder gshegs kun tu thugs //	
	ma yengs ma brjed ⁵ sems kyi dkyil du zhog //	
TK 8b	(8b) 'di nyid 'di'i don rnams rtogs par gyis //	5
	'di ni gsang ba'i man ngag ste //	
	shin tu ⁶ gsang ba'i ⁷ gsang pa'o // ⁸	
	yang gsang bla na med pa'o // ⁹	
ZN 178,3	nor bu chu srin khar ③ chud ltar //	
	shin tu ¹⁰ gsang ba dam pa'i mchog //	10
	On that account, (it is) transmitted to you.	
	Keep (it) dearly and very solemnly,	
(ZN 178,2)	(this) Wisdom of Self-Awareness, Heart (of) all the Well-gone Ones.	
	Without being distracted, without forgetting, keep it at the centre of (your) mind!	
	Understand this and its implications!	5
	This is the essential instruction on the secret, the most secret of secrets, the unsurpassable, supreme secret.	
(ZN 178,3)	Like a jewel put into the mouth of a crocodile, ¹ (this) very secret, most sacred (teaching),	10
	snod med gcam ¹ bu kha khyer mkhan //	
	'phyar la g.yeng ² zhing ³ dam mi srung ⁴ //	
	slob dpon gsang cing ⁵ rang che bsgrub //	
	mu stegs ⁶ ru tra log par lta //	
	de lta bu'i gang zag la //	5
ZN 178,4	rab tu gsang ba dam pa'i ④ mchog //	
KS 105a	sgra ⁷ tshig ⁸ (105a) tsam yang mi brjod ⁹ do // ¹⁰	

with respect to individuals such as
 unworthy (and) hypocrite charlatans,¹
 wandering and inattentive (people) and (those who) do
 not keep (their) commitments,
 instructors (who keep it) secret and (consider it as their)
 great personal accomplishment,
 heretics² (and) *ru tra*³ (holding) mistaken views, 5
 (ZN 178,4) (it is to be kept) very secret (and) most sacred:
 not even the words (or) sound (of it) are (to be) men-
 tioned.

snod ldan¹ mi 'gyur² brtan³ pa'i blo //⁴
 gzhan gyis mi 'gyur⁵ seng⁶ ge'i bu //
 dad brtson⁷ shes rab snying rje ldan //
 dam tshig srog 'dzin bla ma spyi bor khur //
 de lta bu'i gang zag la // 5
 ZN 178,5 shin tu⁸ gsang zhing ཅུ་ཐས་པ་པར་འབྱེད་པ་ //
 zhes¹¹ gsungs¹² so¹³ //¹⁴

sa ma ya¹⁵ //¹⁶

As for worthy individuals (who are) stable (and) steady in
 mind,
 (who are) not influenced by others, (who are like) the
 offspring of the lion,
 endowed with faith, diligence, superior knowledge (and)
 loving kindness,
 (who) keep (their) commitments (as they would protect
 their own) life, (and who) carry (their) teacher on the
 crown (of their) head,
 to such kind of individuals, 5
 (ZN 178,5) even (if it is) very secret, it is to be taught.”
 Thus it was spoken.

Promise.

de nas tshad med 'od ldan las sogs¹ 'khor mams kyis //

TK 9a (9a) e ma ho //²

zhes³ mgrin⁴ gcig tu⁵ bstod⁶ pa⁷ //
 ston pa kun tu⁸ bzang po thugs rje'i mnga' bdag //⁹
 gang la gang 'dul ston pa // 5
 ZN 178,6 rang ® rig mchog gi¹⁰ ston pa e ma ngo mtshar che'o //¹¹

Then, Tshad med 'Od ldan (and) the rest of the entourage
 thus praised with one voice:

"E ma ho!

How really wonderful is the Teacher Kun tu bZang po,
the Lord of compassion,

(who) teaches whoever (needs to be) tamed, 5
(ZN 178,6) the best Teacher of Self-Awareness!

rdzogs pa chen po byang sems thig le nyag gcig //¹

rgyud thams cad kyi rgyal po //²

lung thams cad kyi rtsa ba //

man ngag thams cad kyi nying khu //

bon gyi sgo mo brgyad³ khri bzhi stong gi⁴ yang

snying // 5

ZN 179,1, ① [241] theg pa rim pa dgu'i yang rtse //

SP 241

gsas mkhar gsum brgya drug cu'i⁵ yang bcud //

'das pa'i gshen rab thams cad kyi⁶ gshegs pa'i lam //

ma 'ongs⁷ pa'i⁸ gshen rab⁹ thams cad 'byung ba'i¹⁰ yum //

ZN 179,2, da lta'i¹¹ gshen¹² (105b) rab¹³ thams cad ② kyi¹⁴

KS 105b

dgongs pa //

10

The Single Essence, Pure-(and-Perfect-)Mind, Great
Perfection,
(is) the king of all *Tantras*,
the root of all precepts,
the pith of all instructions,
the innermost essence of the eighty-four thousand gates
of Bon,¹

5

(ZN 179,1) the summit of the Nine Vehicles,
the essence of the three hundred and sixty gSas mkhar
(deities);²
the path of all the gShen rab who have gone in the past,
the mother (from whom) all the gShen rab of the future
will be generated,
(ZN 179,2) the contemplation of all the gShen rab of the present
(time),

10

ma rig pa'i mun pa sel ba'i¹ sgron me //
dgos 'dod thams cad 'byung ba'i² nor bu //
rdzogs pa chen po byang sems thig le nyag gcig //³
e ma ngo mtshar che'o //⁴

zhes mgrin⁵ gcig tu⁶ bstod do //⁷

5

TK 9b ston pa kun tu⁸ (9b) bzang po nyid kyang //
ZN 179,3 ③ 'khor 'das kyi bon thams cad
mnyam pa chen po'i ngang la gcig tu⁹ bsdus te¹⁰ //
thugs nyid ma g.yos pa'i ngang la bzhugs so¹¹ //¹²

the lamp that dispels the darkness of non-awareness,
the Jewel fulfilling all wishes and wants.
Single Essence, Pure-(and-Perfect-)Mind, Great Perfection.
How really wonderful!"

So they praised with one voice. 5

The Teacher Kun tu bZang po himself and
(ZN 179,3) all phenomena of transmigration and the state transcend-
ing suffering,
being reunited as one in the Condition of great equality,
abide in the Condition of the immovable Mind-itself.

tshad med 'od ldan la¹ sogs² te³ 'khor rnams kyang⁴ //
rang rig pa'i ye shes rang la shar te⁵ //
ZN 179,4 rang 'byung gi⁶ ye shes @ rtogs nas⁷ //
thams cad kun tu⁸ bzang po'i ngang la gnas par gyur to⁹ //

rdzogs pa chen po byang chub sems kyi gnad byang
las¹⁰ // 5

rgyud bu chung bcu gnyis man ngag gi¹¹ rtsa bar
bstan¹² pa //

thig le nyag gcig rdzogs so¹³ //¹⁴

After the Primordial Wisdom of Self-Awareness arose in
themselves,
(ZN 179,4) (and) after having realized the Self-Originated Primordial
Wisdom,
Tshad med 'Od ldan (and) the rest of the retinue
all established themselves in the Condition of Kun tu
bZang po.

From the focal-point of the Pure-and-Perfect-Mind, Great
Perfection, 5
the Twelve Little *Tantras*, taught as the root of the essential
instructions,
Single Essence, are (hereby) completed.

ZN 179,5 bder gshegs dgongs rgyud dgu'i ⑤ thugs kyi bcud¹ //
gang zag nyi shu rtsa bzhi'i nyams kyis² man ngag dril³ //
sprul pa'i sku yis⁴ las can gshen la bstan⁵ //
dus mthar mi nub 'gro don byed par shog //

ces gsungs so⁶ //⁷ 5

(ZN 179,5) May (this) quintessence of the mind-transmission (of) the
Nine Well-Gone Ones,¹
(this) *summa* (of) the essential instructions (which comes)
through the experience of the Twenty-four individuals,²
(and which is) taught by emanations to the lucky gShens,³
unceasingly create the benefit for living beings till the end
of time.

Thus it was spoken. 5

KS 106a sprul pa'i {106a} sku nyid ¹ nam mkha' la gzha'² yal ba ltar³
gshegs so⁴ //⁵

ZN 179,6 ⑥ Gyer spungs nyid ⁶ dgongs pa ⁷ mkha' ltar grol lo //⁸

TK 10a (10a) rim gyis rgyud nas dar ba'o //

sarba manga lam //

bkra shis⁹ //

5

ZN and SP: rim gyis rgyud nas dar ba'o / sarba manga lam / bkra shis //

KS: de nas rim par rgyud nas da lta bdag ngo sho tshul rgyal to / rig pa ma rig pas
gsal gdab shing bris pa dge legs 'phel / dge ba 'gro ba bsngo / bkra shis bde leg [sic]
phun tshog [sic] nas / don gnyis mtha' ru phyin par shog //

TK: swa mā yā / 'gro don rgyas par shog / bkra shis 'phel / 'di bris dge ba'i rtsa ba
ci mchis pa / bdag gi drin can pha mas brtse byas / mkha' khyab tshad sems can
thams cad kyi don du bsngo / rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas thob par gyur cig / bkra shis
s.ho / ho / ho //

The emanation itself¹ departed like a rainbow vanishing
in the sky.

(ZN 179,6) Gyer spungs² was released (in) heavenly contemplation.

Gradually (this teaching) became diffused through
transmission.

May everything be auspicious!

Fortune!³

5

Part Three:

**THE VIEW WHICH IS LIKE
THE LIONS ROAR**

NOTE TO THE CRITICAL EDITION OF THE LTA BA SENG GE SGRA BSGRAGS

The text chosen as the basis for this critical edition is the gter ma entitled lTa ba seng ge sgra bsgrags contained in the collection rDzogs pa chen po zab lam gnad kyigdams pa bsgrags pa skorgsum ma bu cha lag dang bcas pa-a reproduction of a dbu med manuscript preserved at the monastery of bSam gling, Dolpo, and published by Patshang Lama Sonam Gyaltzen, TBMC, 1973 (pp. 619-630; no folio numbering; no marginal title; p. 619, 1 line (title); p. 620, 6 lines; pp. 621-629, 7 lines; p. 630, 8 lines; dbu med script).'

The text has been collated with the homonymous ones contained in:

- the g. Yung drung bon gyi bka' dang bka' rten,2 and in the first and second reprint of the Bon po bKa' 'gyur (ff. 1-10, pp. 373-391; marginal title: Seng ge; first folio,1 line recto, (title), five lines, verso; second folio, 5 lines, recto, 6 lines, verso; remaining folios, 6 lines; dbu med script);' and with
- the Seng ge sgra sgrags [sic] lta ba'i lung, from the rDzogs chen bsgrags pa skorgsum cycle of the Snellgrove collection preserved at the British Library, Oriental and India Office Collections (section marked with key-letter Na, ff. 1-8, no page numbering; marginal title: sGra sgrags; first folio, I line, recto (title), 8 lines, verso; ff. 2-8 recto, 9 lines; folio 8 verso, 8 lines; dbu med script).'

LEGENDA

GK = *rDzogs chen bsgrags pa skor gsum*

KG = *g.Yung drung bon gyi bka' dang bka' rten*, TBMC version, and versions contained in the first and second Sichuan reprints of the Bonpo *bKa' 'gyur*

TL = *Seng ge sgra bsgrags lTa ba'i lung*, text preserved at the British Library

① = line starting point in GK

[373] = page starting point in KG

(1a/b) = folio recto/verso starting point in TL

[We would like to remark here the constant occurrence in TL of the a rjes 'jug after the demonstrative pronoun 'di \('di'\) and the term We \(bde'\), as well as the use of gyi and gyis instead of kyī and kyis.1](#)

GK has a gter shad (2) separation mark after each verse.

CRITICAL EDITION AND ANNOTATED TRANSLATION

GK 619,1, lTa ba seng ge sgra bsgrags bzhugs s.ho² //
 KG 373,
 TL Na 1a¹

GK 620,1, ① [374] (1b) kun tu³ bzang po gshen lha 'od dkar
KG 374, la phyag 'tshal lo //⁴
TL 1b

ston pa thugs rje che mnga' bas //
 thugs kyi dkyil nas bcud phyung nas //
 GK 620,2 byin gyis brlabs kyis ② bshad pa'i lung //
 seng ge sgra bsgrags lta ba'i lung //
 lung⁵ 'di⁶ kun gyi thun mong⁷ men⁸ //

(GK 619,1) **The View which is like the Lion's Roar.**

(GK 620,1) Homage to Kun tu bZang po gShen lha 'Od dkar!¹

(GK 620,2) The greatly Compassionate Teacher
has expounded (these) precepts of the View which is like
the Lion's Roar as a blessing,
bringing (them) forth from the centre of (his) Heart. 5
These precepts are not customary to everyone.

dper na seng ges¹ sgra bsgrags² na //
sder chags thams cad³ rang bzhin bra⁴
de bzhin lta ba 'di⁵ rtogs na //

GK 620,3 ③ 'khor ba'i dngos po rang grol 'gyur //
de phyir seng ge sgra bsgrags⁶ pa'i //
lta ba'i lung chen 'di⁷ nyid bstan⁸ //⁹

For example, when the lion roars,
 all clawed animals¹ (feel) naturally lost.²
 Similarly, when this View is realized,
 (GK 620,3) the substantiality³ of transmigration will be self-released.
 That is why these great precepts⁴ of the View which is 5
 like the Lion's Roar are taught.

ཀྟུཾ¹
 rang bzhin ma rtogs sems can la //
 rang bzhin dngos po'i 'dug tshul bstan //
 (GK 620,4) ④ rang bzhin nyid ni ma bcos ste² //
 de nyid de ltar snang ba³ yin //
 des⁴ na de don rtogs pa dka' // 5
 de phyir de don bstan⁵ par bya //
 rang bzhin gcig tu ma nges ste⁶ //
 ji ltar btags⁷ pas de ltar snang //

Ka
 Sentient beings (who do) not realize the (Ultimate) Nature,
 are taught the real way (in which) the (Ultimate) Nature
 exists.¹
 (GK 620,4) The (Ultimate) Nature is (by) itself unaltered.
 (That) That itself is like that,² is the appearance.³
 Now, the meaning of that is difficult to understand; 5
 that is why the meaning of that has to be explained.
 Since the (Ultimate) Nature is not determined⁴ as (being) one,
 (it) appears according to the way in which (it) is defined.⁵

GK 620,5	cir ¹ ⑤ bltas cir bsam ² cir bsgrub ³ cing ⁴ //	
KG 375	ji ⁵ ltar chags [375] pa de ltar snang //	
	de ni de yi ⁶ ngang la gnas //	
	ngang ni thams cad kun gyi gzhi ⁷ //	
	rgya mtsho bzhin du ye gnas pas //	5
GK 620,6	bon rnams thams cad 'byung ba'i ⁸ ⑥ gzhi //	
	gnyis su med pa'i ¹⁰ de nyid la //	
	bdag nyid chen po zhes su bya //	
TL 2a	(2a) ma spros pa ru kun la khyab //	
	bsdus pa med par gcig tu gsal //	10
	ma btsal ¹¹ lhun gyis grub pa yin //	
GK 621,1	dus gsum gcig ① ste khyad par med //	
(GK 620,5)	In whatever way (it) arises and according to the way in which (it) is investigated, reflected upon (and) accomplished, so it appears. ¹ As to that, ² it exists in the Condition of That. ³ The Condition (is) the Basis of all (and) every thing. Since it exists (from) the beginning, like the ocean,	5
(GK 620,6)	(it is) the Basis from where all phenomena originate. As to the fact that there is no duality, ⁴ (that) is called the Great Identity. Without diversifying, (it) encompasses everything; without contracting, (it) shines forth as one;	10
	without seeking, (it) is spontaneously accomplished; ⁵	
(GK 621,1)	The three times are one, there is no differentiation.	

ཁ།

des na khyad par nga yis byas //
nga med pa'i sngon rol na //
srid pa gsum gyi ming yang med //
'byung ba¹ lnga'i ming yang med //
sems can sangs rgyas ming yang med // 5
thams cad kun bas² nga sngar 'byung //
thams cad nga yis byas pa yin³ //
nga yi⁴ rang bzhin rnam par dag //⁵

Kha

Now, (as to) the difference, (it is) I¹ (who) made (it).
In former times when I did not exist,
not even the name of the three existence² existed;
not even the name of the five elements existed;
not even the name of enlightened and sentient beings
existed. 5
Before anything whatsoever, I appeared.
(It is) I (that) created everything.
My Nature (is) pure.

gdod nas rang bzhin ka¹ dag pas² //
ye sangs rgyas pa kho³ na yin //
ye sangs rgyas pa'i gzhung⁴ 'di⁵ la //
GK 621,2 blta⁶ ཅ ru⁷ med cing bsrung du med //
KG 376 btsal du med cing sgom [376] du med // 5
sems can don yang bya ru med //
de lta bu'i don rtogs na //
seng ge sgra bsgrags⁸ lta ba rtogs //⁹

Since (it) is the primordial Nature pure from the beginning,
(it) is Primordial Enlightenment itself.

(GK 621,2) With respect to this doctrine of Primordial Enlightenment,
there is nothing to be investigated¹ and nothing to be
protected;
there is nothing to be sought and nothing to be meditated
upon; 5
there is also nothing to be done (for) the benefit (of)
sentient beings.²

When (one) realizes the meaning in that way,
(one) realizes the View which is like the Lion's Roar.

ཀྱུ།¹

(GK 621,3) rtogs par byed pa'i thabs dag ni //
'di² ③ yin gzhan gyis rtogs mi 'gyur //
ji ltar gnas pa'i don bstan³ pa //
ngang dang rang bzhin bdag nyid chen por gnas //
snang ba⁴ stong pa gnyis su med par gnas // 5
snang ba⁵ nyid kyi⁶ gnas lugs ni //

Ga

(GK 621,3) As to the correct method that brings about realization,
(it) is this; through other (methods), realization will not
occur.

The explanation of how (it) exists:

(it) exists as the Condition, the (Ultimate) Nature, and the
Great Identity;

(it) exists as non-duality (of) appearance and emptiness. 5
As for the way of being of appearance itself,

GK 621,4 rtog pa 'dun¹ ④ pa 'di² kho³ na //
 rgyu rkyen yod pa 'di⁴ kho⁵ na //
 rtsol sgrub yod pa 'di⁶ kho⁷ na //⁸
 'pho 'gyur yod pa 'di⁹ kho na //
 'gag¹⁰ sgrub yod pa 'di¹¹ kho¹² na //
 de kho¹³ na nyid ni stong par gnas //
 brtags¹⁴ na¹⁵ ngo bo yongs¹⁶ kyis¹⁷ med //

(GK 621,4) (it is) precisely (that of) desires (and) thoughts,
(it is) precisely (that of) primary (and) instrumental causes,
(it is) precisely (that of) effort (and) achievement,
(it is) precisely (that of) transformation (and) change,
(it is) precisely (that of) hindrance (and)
accomplishment. 5
As for that (which is) precisely so, (it) exists in emptiness;
when examined, (it is found that) there is no essence
whatsoever.

GK 621,5, (2b) de la rgyu rkyen ⑤ ga la 'ong¹ //
 TL 2b rtsol sgrub 'pho 'gyur ga² la 'ong //
 des na de dang de gnyis gcig³ //
 'dug pa dus dang rang bzhin gcig⁴ //
 dbyings chen gcig⁵ na thams cad gnas /
 de nyid shin tu⁶ rtogs pa dka'⁷ //

GK 621,6 rtogs pa dka'⁸ phyir ⑥ lung 'dir blta'o⁹ // ¹⁰

(GK 621,5) In that respect, where do primary (and) instrumental
causes take place?
Where do effort (and) achievement, transformation (and)
change take place?
Thus, that¹ and that,² the two, (are) one;
existence,³ time⁴ and the (Ultimate) Nature (are) one;
everything abides in the single great Dimension.⁵ 5
That itself⁶ (is) very difficult to understand;
(GK 621,6) because (it is) difficult to understand, (it is) contemplated
in (the form of) these precepts.

yod par mos pa drangs pa'i¹ phyir //
thams cad yod par bstan² par bya //
med pa'i zhen pa bzlog³ pa'i phyir //
thams cad yod⁴ par bstan⁵ par bya //
kho na nyid kyi⁶ don rtogs phyir⁷ // 5

GK 621a7, ⑦ [377] thams cad yod par bstan⁸ par bya //
KG 377 de las bzlog⁹ ste¹⁰ de don bstan¹¹ //

In order to guide those who delight in existence,
(it) has to be taught that (it) exists (as) everything;¹
in order to refute those who are attached to non-existence,
(it) has to be taught that (it) exists (as) everything;
in order to understand the meaning of That (which is)
precisely so, 5
(GK 621,7) (it) has to be taught that (it) exists (as) everything;
having been dissuaded from those,² (one) is shown the
meaning (of) That.

des na bon rnams thams¹ cad la //
 dgag sgrub med ces bya ba yin //
 spong len med ces bya ba yin //
 gzung² 'dzin med ces bya ba yin //
 GK 622,1 ① de ltar rang gi gzhung³ bsgrub⁴ na // 5
 gzhan gzhung⁵ khegs⁶ par gdon⁷ mi za //

Thus, with respect to all phenomena,
 (it) is said (that) there is no obstruction (nor) achievement;
 (it) is said (that) there is no acceptance (nor) rejection;
 (it) is said (that) there is no grasping (nor) grasped.
 (GK 622,1) When (this) doctrine is accordingly made one's own, 5
 there is no doubt that other doctrines will be disproved.

ཁ།
 khyad par bla med don bstan¹ na //
 brda² dang man ngag gnyis kyis³ bstan⁴ //
 'khor 'das gnyis kyis⁵ bar shed na //
 bar pa byed pa'i brda⁶ gcig⁷ bdog //
 GK 622,2 de bzhin sems can⁸ sangs rgyas ② kyang⁹ // 5
 dbyings dang ye shes de las rtsogs¹⁰ //
 des na brda yis¹¹ shes par bya //

Nga
 In particular, when the supreme meaning is taught,
 (it is) taught through symbols and instructions.
 In between transmigration (and) the state transcending
 suffering,
 there is one symbol that acts (as) mediator;¹
 (GK 622,2) (it is) the same with enlightened, sentient beings, 5
 Dimension and Primordial Wisdom and so on.
 Consequently, (it) is made known through the symbol.

lta ba lta ru med pa la¹ //
 rang bzhin lta ba'i grogs po la //
 gcig dang du ma las 'das cing² //
 dbyibs³ dang kha dog lta ru⁴ med //
 bzang ngan che chung lta rgyu med⁵ //
 ye nas rang bzhin ka dag yin //
 GK 622,3 ③ de las rang bzhin med pa gcig //
 kun tu⁶ bzang po ngas ma bshad //

5

For what concerns the View (that is) without investigation,
 (the Ultimate) Nature, (which is) the companion of the View,
 (is) beyond the one and many;
 (it) cannot be looked upon (as having) colour or form;
 (it) cannot be looked upon (as being) good (or) bad, big
 (or) small.

5

(It) is the primordial Nature, pure from the beginning.
 (GK 622,3) (That there is an Ultimate) Nature (which is) not that one,
 I, Kun tu bZang po, have not proclaimed.

TL 3a (3a) gang gis de rtogs kun bzang yin //
 de las logs na kun bzang med //
 thams cad gzhi¹ mnyam rang bzhin pas //
 de la de ltar rtogs par gyis //
 byang chub sems la rang bzhin med //
 GK 622,4, byang chub ④ sems [378] la phyogs ris med //
 KG 378 byang chub sems la gzugs² med de³ //
 byang chub sems la bltar⁴ yang med //

5

Whoever realizes that, is Kun (tu) bZang (po).

In turning away from that, Kun (tu) bZang (po) does not exist.

Everything is the (Ultimate) Nature (of) the equal Basis.

Understand it to be like that!

The Pure-and-Perfect-Mind has no (inherent) nature. 5

(GK 622,4) The Pure-and-Perfect-Mind has no partiality (and) inclinations.

The Pure-and-Perfect-Mind has no form; and because of that, the Pure-and-Perfect-Mind is not (something that can be) investigated.

de ltar gang du ma grub pas //

phyogs ris med de¹ phyal par² gnas //

thams cad byang chub sems su gcig //

bon rnames thams cad sems su gcig³ //

GK 622,5 bon rnames khyad par ⑤ chen por cig // 5

gcig pu 'di⁴ zhes mtshon du med //

mtshon du med pa'i don 'di ni //

kun tu⁵ bzang po nyid kyis⁶ bshad //

des na ma btsal⁷ lhun gyis grub //

lhun grub phyogs su lhung ba⁸ med // 10

de ni lta ba'i dam tshig yin //

Likewise, (it) cannot be accomplished in any way.
Being without partiality (and) inclinations, (it) exists in
equality.

Everything (is) one in the Pure-and-Perfect-Mind.

All phenomena (are) one in the Mind.

(GK 622,5) Phenomena (are) one in the Great Difference. 5

This so-called 'singleness' is (itself) without definitions.

(It is) this meaning of being without definitions

(that) Kun tu bZang po himself has proclaimed.

Therefore, without seeking, (it is) spontaneously
accomplished.

(Being) spontaneously accomplished, (it) doesn't fall into
partiality; 10

that is the commitment of the View.

GK 622,6 rtsol ⑥ dang sgrub pa'i mtha'¹ dang bral //
dkar dmar dngos² por³ bsgom⁴ du med //
de ltar rtogs na thams cad yo⁵ //
ye sangs rgyas pa kho⁶ nar 'dug //
de phyir 'gro don bya ru med // 5
med kyang⁷ med par thabs⁸ kyis bstan⁹ //

GK 622,7 rim pas legs par ma ⑦ bstan¹⁰ na //
bdag don med la gzhan don brlag¹¹ //
gnyis kas¹² bon gyi don mi 'gyur //
de phyir de ltar bstan¹³ par bya // 10

(It is) without limits of effort and achievement.

(It) cannot be meditated (upon) as a substance (that is)
white (or) red.

(GK 622,6) When it is understood in that way, everything altogether
exists precisely in Primordial Enlightenment.

For that reason there is nothing to be done (for) the
benefit (of) beings.¹ 5

Even so, (the fact that) there is nothing (to be done for the
benefit of beings) is to be taught by (appropriate) means;

(GK 622,7) if (it is) not duly taught by degrees,
there is no benefit (for) oneself, the benefit (of) others is
lost, (and)

the two will not come (to) the state of Reality;
that is why (it) has to be taught in that way. 10

མ།

thams cad rang bzhin ka dag la //

gnyis su 'dzin pa 'khrul pa ste //

mig¹ btsir zla ba gnyis snang 'dra //

GK 623,1, gnyis su ① snang yang gcig [379] nyid yin //
KG 379 gcig las de na ga la yod //

5

de bzhin thams cad gcig gi ngang //

TL 3b (3b) gnyis su lta ba'i theg dman² rnams //

'bras bu thob par ngas ma bshad //

Ca

As to the (Ultimate) Nature (of) everything, (which is)
pure from the beginning,
to conceive (it) as dual is a delusion;
(it is) like seeing two moons when pressing the eyes.

(GK 623,1) Although (it) appears as two, (it is) just one;
If that (doesn't come) out of the one, how (come it) is
there? 5

Accordingly, everything (is) the Condition of One.
(That) lower vehicles viewing (things) as two
attain the Fruit, I have not proclaimed.

nga yis gnyis su ma bstan¹ te //
khyed kyi blo la gnyis snang bas² //
GK 623,2 des na ② blo yi³ rnam⁴ pa yin //
blo⁵ de bden par khyod ma 'dzin //
gyi⁶ ling mig⁷ la nyin mtshan med // 5
nga la⁸ ye nas⁹ gnyis su med //
gzhi de mnyam¹⁰ pa'i rang bzhin las //
blo¹¹ yis so sor phye ba yang //
mnyam¹² pa gcig las ma g.yos so //¹³

I have not taught duality;
(it) appears (as) duality to your mind;
(GK 623,2) consequently, (that) is the manner (of perceiving) of the mind.
Do not consider that mind as truthful.
In the eyes (of) a fine horse,¹ day and night do not exist; 5
In me, there is no duality from the beginning.
Out of the equal Nature (of) that Basis,
the mind has created distinctions; nonetheless,
(it) has never moved from (that) single equality.

ཨ།

GK 623,3 mnyam¹ ③ pa nyid kyi² don de la //
glang chen ma bskyod³ rnal mar zhog⁴ //
mthar ni nam mkha'i rgya yis thob //
dper na gser gling rdo med ltar //
theg pa gzhan⁵ gyi skyon dag dang⁶ //
spang ba⁷ med par ngang gis⁸ zhi⁹ //
theg pa gzhan¹⁰ gyi yon tan kyang¹¹ //
GK 623,4 'bad ④ pa med par lhun gyis grub //
des na mnyam pa'i rgyal po thob //

5

Cha

(GK 623,3) With respect to that state of equality,
remain calmly unshaken (like an) elephant.
In the end, find (it) through the token of the sky.¹
(In that way,) as for example (in) the golden island
without stones,
the shortcomings of other vehicles are purified and
are naturally abated without being discarded;
also the virtues of other vehicles
(GK 623,4) will be spontaneously accomplished without effort;
therefore, (one) becomes the king of equality.

5

de ltar rtogs pa'i gang zag de //
ye sangs rgyas pa kho¹ nar² yin //
bde³ ba chen po'i klong dkyil na //
rnam rtog mi mnga' cir yang gsal //
KG 380 gzhi ni rang bzhin bcos su [380] med pa la //
GK 623,5 ⑤ rnam rtog blo⁴ yis ji ltar brtags⁵ par snang //
ji ltar snang yang de don bcos su med //
ma bcos ye nas snying po byang chub sems //
byang chub sems ni 'gyur med g.yung drung yin //

5

The individual who realizes (that it is) in that way
 is in the very (state of) Primordial Enlightenment.
 Within the Expanse of great bliss
 there is no conceptuality, everything shines forth in all
 sorts of ways.

(GK 623,5) As to the Basis, which is the (Ultimate) unaltered Nature, 5
 (it) appears in whatever way (it is) considered by the
 conceptual mind.

But no matter how (it) may appear, the state of That
 (remains) unaltered.

(It is) the Pure-and-Perfect-Mind, the unaltered, primor-
 dial quintessence.

The Pure-and-Perfect-Mind is immutable (and) everlasting.

༥།

TL 4a sems nyid mi 'gyur g.yung drung (4a) don rtogs na //
 GK 623,6 skye 'chi¹ 'pho 'gyur ye ⑥ nas g.yung drung don //
 g.yung drung don dang skye 'chi gnyis su med //
 sems ni 'pho 'gyur med de² rtag par gnas //
 'pho 'gyur nyid ni ye nas rtag par gnas³ // 5
 des na thams cad rtag pa⁴ chen por gnas //
 sems can 'pho 'gyur ye nas g.yung drung don //
 GK 623,7 ⑦ g.yung drung don ni ye nas sems nyid⁵ yin //

Ja

When the state of the everlasting, immutable Mind-itself
is realized,

(GK 623,6) birth (and) death (and) transformations (and) changes
(are) from the origin the Everlasting State.

The Everlasting State and birth (and) death do not exist as
a duality.

The Mind, being without transformations (and) changes,
exists as eternity;

transformations (and) changes (themselves) exist in
eternity from the origin;

5

hence, everything exists as great eternity.

Transformations (and) changes (of) sentient beings (are)
from the origin the Everlasting State.

(GK 623,7) The Everlasting State is from the origin the Mind-itself.

gnyis su med pa ye nas g.yung drung don //

bon nyid g.yung drung rgya mtsho lta bu la //

brgyad khri bzhi stong chu bran 'bab pa 'dra //

de yi¹ don la nges par rtogs 'dod na //

dang por² chags par byed pa'i yid thul³ la //

5

GK 624,1 dgon⁴ ① pa'i gnas su yun ring⁵ bsdad⁶ par bya //

bag chags ngan pa'i g.yo 'khrug⁷ bzlog⁸ par bya //

des na mi g.yo⁹ g.yung drung don la bzhag //

(It is) the primordial, Everlasting State without duality.
Reality (is) everlasting, (it is) like the ocean; in that respect
the eighty-four thousand (afflictions)¹ are like converging
streams.

If (one) wishes to realize with certainty the state of That,
at first, in order to tame the mind that creates
attachment,

5

(GK 624,1) (one) should reside (for a) long time in a place of
seclusion (and)
repulse the tumult of bad imprints,
so as to abide without distraction in the Everlasting State.

१।

g.yung drung don ni yid bzhin nor bu 'dra //

dper na yid bzhin nor bu¹ rin chen de //

GK 624,2 sngon gyi las ② dang sbyin pa gtong² ba³ yi⁴ //

KG 381 gang zag skal [381] ldan 'ga'⁵ la yod pa las⁶ //

kun dang kun la de ni ga la yod⁷ //

5

de bzhin de la⁸ de dang de 'dra'o //⁹

Nya

The Everlasting State is like the Wish-fulfilling Gem.

For example, the precious Wish-fulfilling Gem

(GK 624,2) —except for being possessed by a few lucky individuals
in virtue of their generosity and previous meritorious
actions—

in respect with all the others, where is it?

5

Hence, in that respect, That and that are alike.¹

	sems ni u ¹ du 'bar ba'i me tog 'dra //	
	u du 'bar ba'i me tog yang ² //	
GK 624,3	gser gyi ③ grang ³ ma las ⁴ skyes nas //	
	ri rgyal lhun po'i sbubs byung ⁵ ste //	
	ston pa re re byon dus su //	5
	sum bcu rtsa gsum gnas su 'khrungs ⁶ //	
	de ltar 'khrungs ⁷ pa ⁸ dka' ⁹ ba bzhin //	
	sems nyid g.yung drung don 'di ¹⁰ yang //	
TL 4b	(4b) de bzhin rtogs pa dka' ¹¹ ba yin //	
GK 624,4	④ ye nas sems nyid ma bcos pa //	10
	rnam par rtog pa'i ra ba nas //	
	mi rtog sems nyid 'khrungs ¹² pa dka' ¹³ //	

The Mind-itself is like the *Udumbara* flower.

Also the *Udumbara* flower,

(GK 624,3)	which stems out of (cold) gold dust ¹	
	produced (in) the trunk ² of Mount Meru,	
	at the time when each master appeared,	5
	blossomed (only) in the place (of) the Thirty-three (gods). ³	
	Similarly, as (it is) difficult (for it) to blossom,	
	so (it) is difficult (for) this Everlasting State, the Mind-	
	itself, to be perceived.	

(GK 624,4)	The Mind-itself (is) unaltered from the origin.	10
	(It is) difficult (for) the non-conceptual Mind-itself to arise	
	from the enclosure of conceptuality.	

sems nyid de don rtogs 'dod na //
 rnam par rtog pa'i rjes mi 'breng //
 mtshan ma 'khrul pa'i rjes mi gcod //
 sems ⑤ la rtsol ba gzrug¹ mi bya //
 gza' gtad med pa'i dgongs pa la //
 byung tshor rnam rtog med par bzhag //
 mi dmigs thig le chen po la //
 ma bcos don gyis gsal gdab bya //
 des na de don rnyed par 'gyur //
 lam nor ⑥ lam stor lam nyes kyis² //
 de don rnyed par mi 'gyur te³ //
 byis pas⁴ 'ja'⁵ mtshon 'ded⁶ pa 'dra //
 glang chen smig⁷ sgyu snyeg pa 'dra //
 lam ni nye⁸ [382] lam bde⁹ rdzogs yin //

GK 624,6

KG 382

10

Ta

If one wishes to realize the state of That, the Mind-itself,
(one) does not pursue conceptuality;

(one) does not follow the delusion (of) characterization.

(GK 624,5) With respect to the Mind, no effort is to be undertaken.

With respect to the contemplation which is not

conceived,¹

5

(one) remains without concepts (and without following)
feelings.

The unimagined great *Thig le*

is to be clearly hit by the unaltered state.²

In that way, the state of That will be found.

(GK 624,6) Through mistaken,³ astrayed⁴ and wrong⁵ paths

10

the state of That will not be found.

(Followers of those paths) are like children chasing a
rainbow,

like elephants pursuing a mirage.

The (real) path is the direct path (of) perfection and bliss.

ཁ།

sems nyid¹ mi 'gyur g.yung drung yin //

'khrul pa sna tshogs cir² yang snang //

GK 624,7 ⑦ snang ba³ nyid na g.yung drung don //

sbrul dang thag pa ji⁴ bzhin no //

thag pa med par sbrul mi 'khrul //

5

sbrul du snang ba⁵ thag pa yin //

'khrul pa nyid ni g.yung drung yin //

'di don rtogs pa'i dpe⁶ bstan⁷ na //

GK 625,1 rgyal bu stor ba khungs ① chod 'dra //

des na de dang de 'dra bas //

10

Tha

The Mind-itself is immutable (and) everlasting.

Various delusions appear in all sorts of ways.

(GK 624,7) In appearance itself is the Everlasting State.

It is like (when there is) a rope and (the rope is mistaken
for) a snake.

Without rope, there is no delusion (of) a snake; 5
(what) appears as a snake is the rope.

Delusion itself is the Everlasting.

To show an example for understanding the meaning (of) this,
(GK 625,1) it is like (when) the son (of a) king has been lost (and
then) found.¹

Thus, that² and that³ resemble each other. 10

dngos su de nyid de yin med¹ //

de don 'dod pa'i gang zag gis //

yid kyis² kun gzhi la bltas³ na //

gnyis su med pa'i don rtogs⁴ na //

TL 5a (5a) bde⁵ ba chen po'i don zhes bya //⁶ 5

GK 625,2 ngang dang rang bzhin bdag @ nyid don //

chen po zhes kyang de la bya //

ngang ni kun gzhi ma bcos pa //

rang bzhin de las ma g.yos pa⁷ //

gnyis su med par shes pa ni // 10

de la bdag nyid chen po⁸ bya //

(But) in reality, is that¹ That itself?² (It) is not.
 For someone who aspires to the state of That,
 to realize the meaning of non-duality³ after having
 intellectually reflected upon the Basis (of) all,
 (is what) is called the state of great bliss.

5

(GK 625,2) The meaning of Condition, (Ultimate) Nature and
 Identity,
 which is also called Great:
 the Condition (is) the Basis (of) all (which is) unaltered;
 the (Ultimate) Nature doesn't move from that
 (Condition);
 as to the knowledge of (their) non-duality,
 that is called the Great Identity.

10

¶

sems nyid ngang gyis¹ ma bcos te² //
 rtsol ba kun dang bral bar gnas³ //
 ③ yongs kyis⁴ 'od gsal de la bya //
 de lta bu yi⁵ g.yung drung sems //
 rang gis⁶ rig na brjod⁷ mi 'tshal //
 mtha'⁸ dang dbus med kun tu⁹ bzang po yin //

5

GK 625,4 skyon yon med pas lhun ④ gyis grub pa yin //
 KG 383 bgrod du med pas [383] rtsol¹⁰ ba'i sems dang bral //
 gzung¹¹ du med pas chags pa kun dang bral //
 mtha'¹² dbus med pas phyogs ris yongs dang bral //¹³

10

Da

Since the Mind-itself is naturally unaltered,
(it) exists without any effort;

(GK 625,3) it is generally called Clear Light.¹

The Everlasting Mind, which (is in) that way,
being spontaneously aware, doesn't seek to express (what
it is aware of). 5

(Being) without borders and centre, (it) is the All-Good.
Having no outside (nor) inside, it is transparent Primor-
dial Wisdom.

(GK 625,4) Having no defects (nor) virtues, (it) is spontaneously
accomplished.

Being without progression, (it is) without the intention of
effort.

Being unprejudiced, (it is) without any attachment. 10

Having no extremes (nor) middle, (it is) without any
partiality (and) inclination.

ཁ།

bon gyi rang bzhin sems las med pa la¹ //

GK 625,5 yul sems ⑤ gnyis su mthong² ba³ 'khrul⁴ pa yin //⁵

btsal⁶ bas ye nas 'khrul pa⁷ ji ltar snang //

ji srid sems kyi⁸ rang bzhin snang zhing srid //

sEMS nyid⁹ byang chub sems las ma gtogs¹⁰ pa // 5

bon kun gzhan¹¹ nas btsal bas gang nas rnyed //

GK 625,6 ⑥ rnyed pa kun tu¹² bzang po ngas ma gsungs //

mnyam nyid ngo bo dag la de mi snang //

nan tar spyod¹³ dang rang nyid rig pa'i sems //

Na

With respect to (the fact that) the (Ultimate) Nature of
phenomena doesn't exist outside the Mind,

(GK 625,5) it is delusive to see the mind (and its) objects as two.

By pursuing (that), as delusion manifests itself from the
beginning (and) as it comes into being,
thus, the disposition of the mind manifests itself (and)
comes into being.

Except for the Pure-and-Perfect-Mind, the Mind-itself, 5
if all phenomena are sought from somewhere else,
whence shall (they) be found?

(GK 625,6) (That they can be) found (elsewhere), I, Kun tu bZang po,
did not proclaim.

To the actual essence (of) equality, that doesn't appear.
Earnest practice and the mind that is aware (of) itself,

TL 5b snang (5b) ba¹ thams cad rang gi sems snang yin //

snang ba² nyid tsam de na³ dmigs su med //

GK 625,7 des na mi snang ba⁴ nyid mthar ⑦ phyin yin //

mi snang ba⁵ nyid sna tshogs snang zhing 'byung //

des na sems⁶ nyid snang ba⁷ mthar phyin yin // 5

sna tshogs snang bas⁸ chad lta spangs //

snang tsam nyid na mi dmigs pas //

des ni rtag pa'i mtha'⁹ spangs so //¹⁰

de ltar de don rtogs pa na //

GK 626,1 rtag ① chad gnyis med bon gyi sku //

10

snang stong dag¹¹ la dgag sgrub med //¹²

all appearances are a display (of) one's (own) Mind.
Appearance, being nothing else but appearance, cannot
be conceived.¹

- (GK 625,7) Therefore, non-appearance itself is the finality.
Non-appearance arises and manifests itself (in) various
ways.
Therefore, the Mind-itself is the finality (of) appearance. 5
Since it manifests itself (in) various ways, (it) eludes the
nihilistic view.
Since appearance, being nothing else but appearance,
cannot be conceived,
(it) eludes the extreme (view) of eternalism (as well).
Realizing the state of That in such way,
(GK 626,1) (is to realize) the Body of Reality (which is) without
duality (of) eternalism (and) nihilism, (where) 10
appearance is not obstructed, (and) emptiness is not
produced.

ཁ།

- KG 384 bon nyid g.yung drung sems las ma gtogs¹ pa //
de las [384] lhag pa'i bon gcig² ga na yod //
bon nyid byang chub sems su ma shes na //
bag chags 'byung 'jug rjes su brtags³ pas 'khrul //
GK 626,2 ② srid pa ma lus snang ba'i⁴ rgyu med de⁵ // 5
rnam rtog 'khrul pa'i⁶ dbang gyis⁷ sems nyid srid par
'byung //
srid dgu⁸ nges⁹ pa'i rtsa ba gcig pu ba //
sna tshogs bag chags dngos por mthong¹⁰ ba¹¹ dang¹² //
yod med rtag chad bzung bas³³⁸ gtan du phung //

Pa

Except for the Reality, the Everlasting Mind,
beyond that, where does a single phenomenon exist?
When Reality is not known as (being) the Pure-and-
Perfect-Mind,

by conceptualizing according to (the notions that) arise
(from and) follow (one's) imprints, (one) is deluded.

(GK 626,2) All existence¹ has no cause for appearing;² 5
(it is) through the power of delusive conceptuality (that)
the Mind-itself arises as existence.³

The real root (of) the many existences (is) one.
(In) taking imprints (of) all sorts for real, and
(in) adhering (to) existence (and) non-existence,
eternalism, (and) nihilism (one) is always doomed.⁴

པ།

GK 626,3 rang rig rnal chen ③ ye nas bya med la //
snang dang¹ mi snang dpyod las 'das par bzhag //
de ltar rig pa'i sems byung na //
ye nas sang rgyas yin par gnas //
sangs rgyas yin pa'i don de la // 5
la las 'khrul pa nyid du mthong //

GK 626,4, (6a) la las sangs rgyas nyid ④ du mthong //
TL 6a mthong lugs mi mthun² so sor snang //
snang tsam nyid na mnyam pa'i ngang //
ye nas rol pa chen po yin // 10
mi gnas gnas pa'i³ yul med pas //
ma rtogs⁴ bon gyi dbyings las byung //

Pha

(GK 626,3) Calm Self-Awareness,¹ which is devoid of action from the origin,
remains beyond the judgement (of what) appears² (or) doesn't appear.
Once the Mind of such Awareness arises,
(it) remains (and) exists (as) Primordial Enlightenment.
As to that state that exists (as) Enlightenment, 5
some see it just as delusion,
(GK 626,4) some see it just as Enlightenment.
The ways of seeing (it) differ; (it) appears in distinct ways.
Appearance, being nothing else but appearance, (is) the
Condition of equality;
(it) is the primordial Great Play. 10
(It) does not have a place where it exists (or where it) does not exist:
(it) has come forth from the Dimension of unconceived Reality.

५।

GK 626,5 snang ba med pas chags pa spangs¹ //
 ⑤ mthong² tshor rjes su mi 'jug bden pa'i³ lam //
 mu med bral ba'i dbyings nyid la //
 snang med rig⁴ pa rang grol ba'o⁵ //⁶
 dmigs su med pas rang grol gsal // 5
 kha spub⁷ spyi tshugs gar 'dres⁸ kyang //
 KG 385 [385] ye shes dbyings las g.yos pa med //

Ba

Since appearance is non-existent,¹ attachment is (to be) given up.

- (GK 626,5) The true path (is that of) not going after perceptions.
As to the Dimension itself, which is without limits,
(it) is self-released Awareness devoid of appearances.
Without being conceived, (it) shines forth (in a) self-released (way): 5
no matter how (it) is mixed, turned over or upside down,
Primordial Wisdom does not move from the Dimension.

- GK 626,6 ⑥ ye shes nyid kyis¹ mi rnyed pas //
ye ni mthong² spyad de la med //
snang med mthong³ bas⁴ ye shes nyid //
nyid la gsal rtogs⁵ dpe⁶ dang bral //
snang med srid pa sus mthong⁷ ba⁸ // 5
des ni sems kyi⁹ srid pa mthong¹⁰ //

- (GK 626,6) Primordial Wisdom doesn't find itself:
(it is) 'Primordial', (since it) is without (any) assumed
(way of) seeing;
(it is) 'Wisdom', just because (it) sees without appearances;
as to the 'itself', (it means that it) clearly perceives (itself)
beyond examples.
Whoever sees the existence (of that which is) without
appearances, 5
that (person) sees the existence of the Mind.

མ།

GK 626,7 snang ba¹ rang² sa³ 'khrul ⑦ pa yin //
sna tshogs mthong⁴ ba⁵ bag chags rgyu //
sems la 'gog pa'i bag chags yin //
'khrul pa sna tshogs sems yin na⁶ //
'khor ba⁷ rgyu 'bras gang nas 'ong⁸ //
sems ni cir yang snang ba⁹ yin //
de ltar smar¹⁰ ba sus rtogs pa
GK 627,1 de yis ① 'khrul pa'i phyi bzhin 'brengs //

5

Ma

(GK 626,7) Appearance is (in) itself delusion.
The various (ways of) seeing (are) the cause (of) the
imprints.
Imprints are that which (creates) obstruction with respect
to the Mind.
If the various delusions are the Mind,
where do the causes (and) effects (of) transmigration
come from?
As to the Mind, it appears in whatsoever way.
Whoever realizes (that which is) thus proclaimed,
(GK 627,1) that (person) goes after delusions.¹

5

TL 6b snang ba¹ ma grub zer ba nyid //
chad pa'i dngos por brtags² pa yin //
snang ba'i³ rgyu la dpyad pas (6b) phung //
snang ba⁴ med par ye gsal la //
kun bzang bshad⁵ pa mi mdzad do //

5

To just say (that) appearance is not produced,
is to conceive (it) as the substance of nihilism,
(and) to fail in recognizing the cause of appearance
(itself).

(That) from the origin (it) shines forth as devoid (of)
appearance

is not what Kun (tu) bZang (po) (himself) has
proclaimed.

5

མེ

GK 627,2 rig pa'i ye shes su ② snang ba¹ //
dus gsum gshen rab² de dang 'brel //
snying rje sna tshogs su snang ba³ //
khams⁴ gsum sems can de dang 'brel //
gnyis su med pa bon gyi⁵ sku //
de lta bu'i don nyid la //
g.yeng ba⁶ lnga dang bral ba ni //
de nyid sangs rgyas kho⁷ na yin //

5

GK 627,3 rig pa rang las gsal shar ③ na //

KG 386 nyin [386] dang mtshan du ga la yod //

10

Tsa

- (GK 627,2) Appearance as the Primordial Wisdom of Awareness
is linked with the gShen rab (of) the three times.
Appearance as the various (forms of) loving kindness
is linked with sentient beings (of) the three spheres.
The Body of Reality (is) without duality. 5
As to the state which is like that, (and which is)
without the five diversions,¹
that is precisely (the state of) Enlightenment.
- (GK 627,3) When Awareness clearly arises from itself,
where is day and where is night?² 10
- ye bdal khyab par gdod¹ gnas pas //
che chung gnyis su ga la yod //
stobs kyi² rgyal po thabs rig pas //
thub dang ma thub gnyis su med //
byang chub kyi³ ni⁴ snying po de // 5
sems kyi⁵ snying por ye gnas pas //
GK 627,4 bde⁶ ④ dang mi bde⁷ gnyis su med //
ka⁸ dag ye shes rang snang bas⁹ //
rgyu 'bras tha dad ye nas med¹⁰ //
bon rnams sgyu ma'i rang bzhin la // 10
bdag sems 'khrul pa'i¹¹ 'dzin chags med //
rnam rtog mi mnga' cir yang gsal //

Since it exists from the origin as (that which is) primordi-
 ally encompassing,
 where's the difference between big (and) small?
 When one observes the means (of) a mighty king,
 possible and impossible do not exist.
 That quintessence, the Pure-and-Perfect, 5
 existing (from) the origin as the quintessence of the mind,
 (GK 627,4) is without both joy and sorrow.
 Since the Primordial Wisdom pure from the beginning
 appears (by) itself,
 it is from the origin without distinctions (of) cause (and)
 effect.
 With respect to the mirage-like nature (of) phenomena, 10
 (it) doesn't have the delusive grasping (and) attachment
 (of) the mind (of the) self;
 (being) without conceptuality, (it) clearly shines forth in
 all sorts of ways.

བློ་བཟང་པོ་
 bon nyid bde¹ ba chen po² la //
 GK 627,5 bsgom³ na byis ⑤ pa'i spyod yul lags //
 ma bsgom⁴ tsam na bsgom pa yin //
 bdag sems ye nas lhun grub la⁵ //
 mtshan ma can gyis bslad⁶ du med // 5
 ye nas ma bsgrubs⁷ ye grub dkyil 'khor⁸ la //
 gang zag rnams kyis⁹ sgrub tu¹⁰ med //
 sgrub med btsal¹¹ med snying po 'di¹² //
 GK 627,6, ⑥ de ni ye (7a) nas de ltar gnas //
 TL 7a

Tsha

To meditate on the Reality (which is) the great bliss
(GK 627,5) is a childish activity;
when there is no meditation, (that is when it) is meditated.
One's Mind, (which is) spontaneously accomplished from
the origin,
is not tainted by that which is characterized. 5
The primordially unaccomplished Circle, (being) accom-
plished from the origin,
cannot be accomplished by individuals.
This quintessence, unaccomplished (and) unsought for,
(GK 627,6) exists in that way¹ from the origin.

sus rtogs de ni dngos grub mchog //
dngos grub gzhan¹ nas blang du med //
med pa de² nyid³ dngos grub yin //
dngos grub mchog ni de don yin //
mtshan ma'i dngos grub dngos⁴ grub men // 5
(GK 627,7) de phyir dngos⁵ ⑦ grub dam pa long⁶ //
KG 387 dngos [387] grub dam pa mi len pa //
khyi⁷ rgan⁸ ha seng⁹ khyer ba¹⁰ 'dra¹¹ //

Whoever realizes (that, obtains) the best accomplishment;
(the real) accomplishment is not received from elsewhere.
The very absence (of being received from elsewhere) is
the accomplishment;
the best accomplishment is the state (of) That;
characterized accomplishment is not accomplishment. 5
(GK 627,7) Therefore, take (that) sacred accomplishment!
Not to take the sacred accomplishment
is like carrying around an old, frail dog.



thams cad mnyam pa'i rgyal po la //
 mi mnyam gnyis 'dzin 'khrul pa ste //
 'khrul pa de la spyad mi bya¹ //
 mnyam pa nyid du ye nas kyang² //
 blo dngos³ bzhi la so sor snang //

5

GK 628,1 ① so sor snang yang gcig las med //
 khyad par chen po'i gzhung⁴ 'di⁵ la //
 thams cad mnyam pa⁶ nyid du⁷ gnas //

Dza

For the king who is total equality,
 to conceive (in a) dual (and) non-equal (way) is a delusion.
 As to that delusion, (it) must not be acted upon.

Although (it exists) from the origin as equality itself,
 to the mind, (it) truly appears in four distinct ways.¹ 5

(GK 628,1) (It) appears in distinct ways, but it doesn't exist otherwise
 than as one.

According to this doctrine of the Great Difference,
 everything exists as equality itself:

'khor 'das gnyis med mnyam pa'i ngang //
 snang stong gnyis med mnyam pa'i ngang //
 rtag chad gnyis med mnyam pa'i ngang //
 mun snang gnyis med mnyam pa'i ngang //
 ② dgra zin¹ gnyis med mnyam pa'i ngang //
 yod med gnyis med mnyam pa'i ngang //
 thams cad gnyis med mnyam pa'i ngang //
 shin tu² mkhas pa'i rtogs pa las //
 kun gyis³ rtogs par mi 'gyur ro //⁴

GK 628,2

5

transmigration (and) the state transcending suffering are
 not two, (they are) the Condition of equality;
 appearance (and) emptiness are not two, (they are) the
 Condition of equality;
 eternalism (and) nihilism are not two, (they are) the
 Condition of equality;
 darkness (and) light are not two, (they are) the Condition
 of equality;
 (GK 628,2) friend (and) foe are not two, (they are) the Condition of
 equality; 5
 existence (and) non-existence are not two, (they are) the
 Condition of equality;
 everything is not two, (it is) the Condition of equality.
 Except for being realized by the very wise ones,
 (it) will not be realized by all.

ལ།

thams cad gnyis med gcig pu yin //
 thams cad gnyis med gcig pu bas //
 (GK 628,3) mchod pa'i yul¹ yang ③ gzhan² na med //
 rang bzhin ka³ dag kho na bas //
 de las ma gtogs⁴ gzhan pa med //
 des na de don rtogs pa dka' //
 de la gtan⁴ tshigs ma bstan⁵ na //
 mun nag nang gi mdzub⁶ yug⁷ yin //

Wa

Everything is not two, (it) is one;
since everything is not two (because it) is one,
(GK 628,3) also the object of worship is not somewhere else.
The (Ultimate) Nature is precisely primordial purity;
besides that, there is nothing else; 5
for that reason, the state (of) That is difficult to understand.
When in that respect the cause (of being) is not pointed out,
(it) is (like) feeling one's way in darkness.

KG 388 de phyir gtan¹ tshigs [388] bshad cing bstan² //
GK 628,4, ④ gnyis su med las (7b) gnyis 'dod pa //
TL 7b de ni nyes par gol ba yin //
phyi nang gnyis med gcig gi ngang //
rtag chad las sogs gcig gi³ ngang // 5

That is why the cause (of being) is related and pointed out.
(GK 628,4) To acknowledge duality rather than non-duality,
that is a noxious mistake.
Outside (and) inside¹ are not two, (they are) the
Condition of One;
eternalism (and) nihilism and so on (are not two),
(they are) the Condition of One. 5

ཁ།

	snang ba ¹ nyid ni stong pa yin //	
	stong pa nyid ni snang ba ² yin //	
	de gnyis gcig pa yin pa'i phyir //	
GK 628,5	de phyir sangs rgyas sems can ཅ yin //	
	sems can sangs rgyas ci phyir men //	5
	dmyal ³ ba'i gnas ni bon gyi ⁴ dbyings //	
	de phyir bon dbyings dmyal ba'i gnas //	
	rag sha ⁵ a ba glang ⁶ mgo ⁷ can //	
	de ni kun bzang gshen lha yin //	
GK 628,6	de phyir kun bzang gshen ⁸ ཅ lha yang //	10
	rag sha ⁹ a ba ¹⁰ glang ¹¹ mgo ¹² yin //	

Zha

	Appearance is emptiness.	
	Emptiness is appearance.	
	Since those two are one,	
(GK 628,5)	then, enlightened beings are sentient beings.	
	(So) why should sentient beings not be enlightened beings?	5
	(If) hell (is) the Dimension of Reality,	
	then, the Dimension of Reality (is) hell.	
	(If) Rag sha A ba Glang mgo can ¹	
	is Kun bzang gShen lha,	
(GK 628,6)	then, also Kun bzang gShen lha	10
	is Rag sha A ba Glang mgo can.	

sdug bsngal 'di¹ nyid bde² ba yin //
 bde³ ba de nyid de yin mod //
 de phyir thams cad gcig pa yin //
 zhen pa'i⁴ blo⁵ la so sor snang //
 kun bzang ngang du yongs kyis⁶ gcig // 5
 GK 628,7 zhag mig⁷ can la mun ། par⁸ snang⁹ //
 chu bur¹⁰ mig¹¹ la nam mkhar¹² snang //
 gyi ling mig¹³ la mun snang med //
 des na thams cad gnyis med yin //

(If) this very suffering is joy, (and)

that very joy is certainly that,¹

then, everything is the same.

To the biased mind (they)² appear differently.

In the Condition (of) Kun (tu) bZang (po), (they are)
absolutely one. 5

(GK 628,7) To those with nocturnal³ eyes, (it) appears as darkness;
 to (those with) eyeballs,⁴ (it) appears as light.
 In the eyes (of) a fine horse, darkness (and) light do not exist.
 Thus, everything is non-dual.

ཟ།

- rang 'byung dbyings kyi thig ler ni //
sna tshogs 'khor ba'i bon rnams gcig //
thams cad yongs rdzogs kun gzhi'i ngang //
GK 629,1, yul dang ① dbang po'i [389] dbye ba med //
KG 389 thig le kun bsdus kun la khyab // 5
thams cad ma lus bde¹ ba'i klong //
sdug bsngal bya ba'i ming yang med //
thams cad ma lus ye sangs rgyas //
ji ltar mtshan med mi g.yo ba //
nam mkha'i rang bzhin rgyu rkyen med // 10
GK 629,2, ② (8a) gnyen po rtog pa'i mthus² mi g.yo //
TL 8a

Za

- With respect to the Essence which is the self-originated
Dimension,
the various phenomena of transmigration (are) one.
(In) the Condition of the Basis (of) all, (where) everything
is totally perfected,
(GK 629,1) there is no separation of senses and (sense-) objects.
The Essence unites everything, it is all-encompassing; 5
(it is) the blissful Expanse (encompassing) everything
without exception,
(where) not even the name of suffering exists; (where)
everything, without exception, (is) Primordial Enlightenment.
Like the unmoving (and) uncharacterized
nature of the sky, (which is) without primary (and)
instrumental causes, 10
(GK 629,2) (the Essence is) not moved by the power of conflictual
conceptuality.

de phyir¹ bde² chen byang chub sems //
 bon sku kun gzhi bde³ ba'i ngang //
 mi 'gyur mi shigs⁴ g.yung drung sku //
 sems dang ye shes tha dad med //
 rang blo⁵ bde⁶ ba'i ye shes 'gyur // 5
 GK 629,3 ye nas gnas pa'i⁷ ③ bon gyi sku
 khyab par gnas pa thig le'i klong //
 snang srid zhi ba'i mya ngan 'das //⁸

For that reason (it is called) the Pure-and-Perfect-Mind,
 Great Bliss,
 the Body (of) Reality, the Basis (of) all, the Condition of
 bliss,
 the Immutable, Unwavering, Everlasting Body.
 There is no distinction (between) Primordial Wisdom and
 the mind;
 one's mind becomes blissful Primordial Wisdom, 5
 (GK 629,3) the Body of Reality existing from the origin,
 the Expanse of the Essence existing in (an all-)pervading
 (way),
 the transcending-of-suffering where appearance (and)
 coming-into-being are pacified.

ཨ།

seng ge sgra bsgrags¹ lung 'di² la //

don gyi yan lag gnyis su bshad //

lta ba seng ge sgra bsgrags³ dang //

man ngag seng ge sgra bsgrags⁴ gnyis //

GK 629,4 lta ba seng ge sgra bsgrags⁵ ④ ni //

5

phyi dang nang med thams cad kun //

ma bcos gdod⁶ nas ka⁷ dag nyid //

rang bzhin nyid nas⁸ ye sangs rgyas //

thig le chen po bon gyi sku //

nam mkha' lta bur mtshon dang bral //

10

'di ni seng ge sgra bsgrags⁹ lta ba'i mchog //

'A

As to these precepts (of) the Lion's Roar,

they are expounded in two principal parts:

(that of) the View which is like the Lion's Roar, and

(that of) the essential instructions which are like the

Lion's Roar.

(GK 629,4) The View which is like the Lion's Roar:

5

without outside (nor) inside, (it is) everything altogether;

(it is) unaltered, primordially pure from the origin.

(Being) the (Ultimate) Nature itself, (it is) Primordial

Enlightenment;

(it is) the great Essence, the Body of Reality;

(it is) without defining marks, like the sky.

10

This is the excellent View which is like the Lion's Roar.

GK 629,5	mi 'gyur mi ⑤ gnas ji ltar ma yin cing //	
KG 390	ji [390] ltar yang ni ¹ mi 'jog pa yin no // ² chags med mtshon ³ bral rtog pa med // gnyis med spros bral mi rtog ma bcos pa // gsal la ma nor ma g.yos dngos po med //	5
	cir yang spyad med cir yang brtag tu ⁴ med ⁵ //	
GK 629,6	cir yang mi dmigs cir ⑥ yang 'dzin pa med // ye nas rang bzhin snying po gcig gi ngang //	
TL 8b	ji bzhin ma bcos (8b) thams cad ⁶ de bzhin pas // bsgom ⁷ du med cing bstan ⁸ du med pa yin // 'di ⁹ ni seng ge sgra bsgrags ¹⁰ lta ba'i mchog //	10
(GK 629,5)	(It is) immutable, unlocated, (it) is not in any way whatsoever, and (it) is not fixed in any way at all. (It is) unbegotten, without definition, without conceptuality. (It is) non-dual, without diversification, non-conceptual, unaltered. (It is) clear and infallible, immovable, insubstantial. 5 (It is) not (to be) acted (upon) in any way (and) not (to be) examined in any way.	
(GK 629,6)	(It is) not (to be) conceived in any way (and) not (to be) grasped in any way. (It is) the primordial Nature, the quintessence, the Condi- tion of One; how (that is) unaltered, so is everything. (It is) not (to be) meditated (upon), (it) is without description. 10 This is the best View which is like the Lion's Roar.	

	man ngag seng ge sgra bsgrags ¹ la //	
GK 629,7	blta ru med pa'i ⑦ lta ba la //	
	mi lta de bzhin ngang gnas pa ² //	
	de ni man ngag sgra bsgrags ³ yin //	
	'gyur med g.yung drung lta ba la //	5
	mi dmigs ma bcos ngang gnas ⁴ pa //	
	de yang man ngag sgra bsgrags ⁵ yin //	
	lta ba ma g.yos spros dang bral //	
GK 630,1	ma yengs mi rtog ① ngang gnas pa //	
	de yang man ngag sgra bsgrags ⁶ yin //	10
	bsgom ⁷ du ci yang med pa la //	
	yengs pa med par ngang ⁸ gnas pa //	
	de yang man ngag sgra bsgrags ⁹ yin //	

The essential instructions which are like the Lion's Roar.
 (GK 629,7) With respect to the View which cannot be investigated,
 just without investigating, (one) remains (in that) Condition.
 That is the resounding Roar of the instructions.
 With respect to the View (which is) immutable (and)
 everlasting, 5
 (one) remains (in that) Condition without correction and
 without (working with the) imagination.
 That also is the resounding Roar of the instructions.
 (With respect to) the View (which is) unmoving
 (and) without diversification,
 (GK 630,1) (one) remains (in that) Condition undistracted (and)
 without conceptualization.
 That also is the resounding Roar of the instructions. 10
 With respect to (the fact that it) is not (something) to be
 meditated (upon) in whatever way,
 (one) remains undistractedly (in that) Condition.
 That also is the resounding Roar of the instructions.

des na lung 'di¹ khyad par che //
 'khor ba dong nas sprug² 'dod na //
 GK 630,2 lung gi rgyal po ② 'di³ la ltos //
 seng ge sgra bsgrags⁴ lta ba'i lung zhes bya ba rdzogs
 s.ho⁵ //⁶
 zab rgya rgya // 5
 gab rgya rgya //
 KG 391 [391] rgya rgya //
 rgya rgya //
 dge'o⁷ //⁸

Thus, these precepts (are) particularly great.
If (you) wish to escape from the abyss (of) transmigration,
(GK 630,2) contemplate this king of precepts!
The so-called precepts of the View which is like the
Lion's Roar are (hereby) completed.
Deeply sealed, sealed. 5
Secretely sealed, sealed.
Sealed, sealed.
Sealed, sealed.
Happiness.¹

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INDEXED GLOSSARY

I. Sanskrit Terms'

akaniṣṭha	(<i>'og min</i>), name of heaven, 81 n. 5
arūpadhātu	(<i>gzugs med kham</i> s), the sphere without form, 53 n. 155; 81 n. 5
avyākṛita	(<i>lung ma bstan</i>), neutral, 54 n. 161
ālaya-vijñāna	(<i>kun gzhi rnam par shes pa</i>), the Basis-consciousness, 22 n. 25; 53
uḍḍiyāna	(<i>u rgyan, o rgyan</i>), birthplace of dGa' rab rDo rje, 23 n. 28
kāmadhātu	(<i>'dod kham</i> s), the sphere of desire, 53 n. 155; 81 n. 5
guhyagarbha	(<i>gsang ba snying po</i>), name of <i>tantra</i> , 25
tathāgatagarbha	(<i>de bzhin gshegs pa'i snying po</i>), Buddha essence, 44 n. 115
tantra	(<i>rgyud</i>), category of teachings, 22; 24 n. 39; 28; 30; 40; 41 n. 108; 46 n. 127; 79 n. 3; 97 n. 4; 133, nn. 1, 2; 141; 153 n. 2; 271 n. 1
trāyastriṃśa	(<i>gsum cu rtsa gsum gyi gnas</i>), name of heaven, 215 n. 3
dṛiṣṭi	(<i>lta ba</i>), theory, view, 43 n. 110
nimitta	(<i>mtshan ma</i>), characterization, 60 n. 178
nirvāṇa	(<i>mya ngan las 'das pa</i>), the state transcending suffering, 23 n. 28
prapañca	(<i>spros pa</i>), diversification, 60 n. 178

bodhicitta	(<i>byang chub kyi sems</i>), the Pure-and-Perfect-Mind, 56, 56 n. 169
bhikṣuṇī	(<i>dge slong ma</i>), fully ordained Buddhist nun, 23
maṇḍala	(<i>dkyil 'khor</i>), (sacred) circle, 47 n. 128
mahāyāna	(<i>theg pa chen po</i>), the Great Vehicle, 38; 40; 56
mahāyoga	(<i>rnal byor chen mo</i>), a class of <i>tantras</i> , 22; 24
yogācāra	(<i>sems tsam pa</i>), Indian Buddhist philosophical school, 22 n. 25; 52
rūpadhātu	(<i>gzugs kham</i> s), the sphere of form, 53 n. 155; 81 n. 5
vāsanā	(<i>bag chags</i>), (karmic) imprint, 53
sūtra	(<i>mdo</i>), class of scriptures, 56
hetu	(<i>gtan tshigs</i>), cause (of being), 123 n. 1

H. Tibetan Terms

<i>ka (nas) dag</i>	pure from the beginning, 50; 53; 60 n. 180; 89; 95; 111; 193; 201; 243; 265
<i>ka dag chen po</i>	great primordial purity, 55
<i>ka (nas) dag (pa)</i>	primordial purity, 56; 58; 253
<i>kun tu brtags pa'i ma rig pa</i>	the non-awareness that defines everything, 64
<i>kun tu bzang po</i>	the All-Good, (the Primordial Teacher; also, gShen lha 'Od dkar), 28; 40; 44 n. 117; 50; 51; 55; 81; 85 n. 1; 87; 95; 103; 151; 155; 159 n. 1; 169; 193; 195; 197; 223; 225; 239; 257
<i>kun tu bzang po'i dgongs pa</i>	the contemplation of Kun tu bZang po, 115; 141

<i>kun tu bzang po'i ngang</i>	the Condition of Kun tu bZang po, 46 n. 122; 49; 50; 54; 63 n. 191; 157; 259
<i>kun tu bzang po'i lta ba</i>	the View of Kun tu bZang po, 111; 203 n. 1
<i>kun gzhi (kun gyi gzhi)</i>	the Basis of all, 40; 52; 53; 58; 59; 61; 65; 91; 173 n. 1; 175 nn. 3, 4; 221; 261; 263
<i>kun la khyab (pa)</i>	all-encompassing, 261
<i>klu</i>	subterranean beings, 27; 39; 177 n. 2
<i>klong</i>	Expanse, 46 n. 124; 59; 261; 263
<i>dkar chag</i>	catalogue, 30 n. 62; 32 n. 71; 61 n. 184
<i>dkyil 'khor (1)</i>	disk, 83
<i>dkyil 'khor (2)</i>	Circle, 245
<i>bka' 'gyur</i>	the <i>corpus</i> of Bonpo canonical texts, 10; 30 n. 59; 31 nn. 67, 68; 32 n. 71; 74; 165 n. 3; 167
<i>bka' brten</i>	the <i>corpus</i> of ancillary literary production based upon 'the Word', 61 n. 184
<i>bka' ma</i>	(uninterruptedly transmitted) Word, 39; 79 n. 3
<i>sku</i>	Body, 52; 61; 99
<i>sku gsum</i>	the Three Bodies, 39; 49 n. 138; 85 n. 1; 97 n. 3; 107; 131
<i>skye 'gag (gnyis) med (pa)</i>	without birth and interruption, 60 n. 180; 93; 127; 129
<i>skye ba'i gnas bzhi</i>	the four locations of birth, 53 n. 158

<i>skye (ba) med (pa)</i>	unborn, without birth, 56; 60 n. 180; 93; 127
<i>skye shi med pa</i>	without birth and death, 45; 99
<i>bskyed rim</i>	the Generation stage (of meditative practices), 20 n. 19; 47 n. 128; 133 n. 2
<i>kham s gsum</i>	the three spheres (of existence), 65; 241
<i>khyad par chen po</i>	the Great Difference, 51 n. 145; 197; 249
<i>khyad par chen po'i gzhung</i>	doctrine of the Great Difference, 50
<i>khyad par med (pa)</i>	without differentiation, 103; 175
<i>khregs chod</i>	one of the two most important practices of the Great Perfection, 68; 68 n. 212
<i>'khor ba (1)</i>	transmigration, 44; 44 n. 120; 48; 50; 53 n. 156; 54; 55 n. 164; 61; 62; 66; 95; 97; 109; 111 n. 1; 117; 155; 171; 191; 229 nn. 1, 3; 237; 251; 261; 271
<i>'khor ba (2)</i>	circle, 65
<i>'khrul pa</i>	delusion, 54; 55; 63 n. 189; 64; 65; 66; 67; 201; 217; 219 n. 3; 221 n. 1; 225; 231; 237 n. 1; 249
<i>'khrul gzhi</i>	the Basis (of) delusion, 55
<i>gang zag nyi shu rtsa bzhi</i>	the Twenty-four human beings (from Zhang Zhung who inherited the Aural transmission of the Great Perfection), 28; 159 n. 2
<i>go mi chod pa</i>	useless, 67
<i>gyi ling</i>	fine and thoroughbred horse, 203 n. 1; 259

<i>grol ba</i>	deliverance, 67
<i>glo bur</i>	accidental, 59; 64
<i>dgag sgrub med (pa)</i>	without obstruction and achievement, 189
<i>dge bsnyen gyi theg pa</i>	the Vehicle of Virtuous Devotees, (the Fifth Vehicle, first Vehicle of the Fruit), 20 n. 19
<i>dge bshes</i>	a degree of learning, (the Tibetan equivalent of Doctor of Philosophy), 10; 10 n. 3; 35; 73 n. 2; 90 n. 3
<i>dgongs rgyud</i>	mind(-to-mind) transmission, 28; 159
<i>dgongs gter</i>	treasure text hidden in and revealed out of the mind of realized teachers, 31
<i>dgongs pa</i>	contemplation, 49; 54 n. 161; 113; 153; 161; 217 n. 2
<i>dgos pa'i grong khyer drug</i>	the six cities of necessity, (i.e., the six spheres of transmigration), 52
<i>bgrod (du) med (pa)</i>	without progression, 91; 101; 223
<i>'gyur (ba) med (pa), mi 'gyur</i>	immutable, 207; 209; 219; 263; 267; 269
<i>rgya gsum</i>	the three 'seals', (i.e., body, speech and mind), 139
<i>rgya gar gyi skor</i>	the Indian cycle (of the Bonpo Great Perfection, attributed to Dran pa Nam mkha' (8th century)), 29
<i>rgyu (dang) rkyen</i>	primary and instrumental causes, 57; 183; 185; 261
<i>rgyu rkyen med (pa)</i>	without primary and instrumental causes, 99
<i>rgyu drug</i>	the six causes, 97

<i>rgyu 'bras</i>	cause and effect, 45
<i>rgyu'i theg pa bzhi</i>	the Four Vehicles of the Cause, 20 n. 19; 249 n. 1
<i>rgyud</i>	transmission, 28; 161 n. 3
<i>rgyud drug</i>	the Six <i>Tantras</i> (belonging to the Middle of the Three Proclamations of the Great Perfection carried out in the Land of Human Beings, (<i>rDzogs chen bsGrags pa skor gsum</i> , <i>Bar mi yul du bsgrags pa'i skor</i>)), 51 n. 146
<i>rgyud sde</i>	<i>tantra</i> , (one of the four Bonpo canonical sections), 31; 32 n. 71
<i>sgo nga</i>	egg, (one of the four locations of birth), 53 n. 158
<i>sgo phug bar gsum</i>	the three provinces of the Zhang Zhung kingdom, 18
<i>sgo bzhi mdzod lnga</i>	the Four Portals and the Treasury counting as Fifth, (one of the two main classification of Bonpo teachings), 32
<i>sgom pa (bsgom)</i>	meditation, 40; 46; 47; 48; 115; 119; 137
<i>sgom (bsgom) du med (pa)</i>	without meditation, not (to be) meditated, 91; 117; 179; 199; 267
<i>sgyu ma</i>	mirage, 63; 217; 243
<i>sgra 'od gzer (gsum)</i>	sound, light and rays, 65; 67 n. 208
<i>bsgyur (lam)</i>	the path of transformation, 97 n. 4

<i>bsgrags pa skor gsum</i>	the Three Proclamations (of the Great Perfection teachings carried out by 'Chi med gTsug phud in the Land of Gods (<i>steng lha yul du bsgrags pa'i skor</i>), the Land of Humans (<i>bar mi yul du bsgrags pa'i skor</i>), and the Land of Subterranean Beings (<i>'og klu yul du bsgrags pa'i skor</i>)), 27; 27 n. 47; 28 n. 48; 39; 45; 51 n. 146
<i>nga rgyal</i>	pride, (one of the five poisons), 53 n. 157
<i>ngang</i>	Condition, 40; 57; 58; 60; 83; 93 n. 2; 117; 123 n. 2; 125; 127; 129; 137; 155; 175; 181; 221; 231; 261; 269
<i>ngo bo</i>	essence, 52; 55; 57; 60; 93 n. 1; 183; 225
<i>dnegos grub</i>	(supernatural) accomplishment, 135; 247
<i>dnegos po</i>	substantiality, 171 n. 3
<i>dnegos po med (pa)</i>	insubstantial, 267
<i>mngal</i>	womb, (one of the four locations of birth) 53 n. 158
<i>mngon shes drug</i>	six precognitions, 67 n. 208
<i>snga dar</i>	earlier propagation of the Bonpo doctrine, 27
<i>sngags sde</i>	the section of Formulas, 32 n. 71; 61 n. 184; cf. <i>rgyud sde</i>
<i>sngags pa</i>	<i>tantric</i> practitioner, 10 n. 3
<i>sngon 'gro</i>	preliminary practices, 10 n. 3
<i>gcan gzan</i>	animals of prey, 171 n. 1
<i>gcig gi ngang</i>	the Condition of One, 201; 267

<i>gcig rgyud</i>	transmission of knowledge during the lifetime of one teacher to one single disciple, 28
<i>gcig pu</i>	singleness, 197
<i>bcos slad med (pa)</i>	untainted and unaltered, 99
<i>chags pa</i>	attachment, 211; 223; 233
<i>chags (pa) med (pa)</i>	unbegotten, 267
<i>chad (pa'i) lta (ba)</i>	the nihilistic view, nihilism, 113 n. 3; 147 n. 2; 227; 229; 239; 251; 255
<i>chu bur mig</i>	eyeballs, 259 n. 4
<i>chu srin</i>	crocodile, 145; 147 n. 3
<i>'ja' lus</i>	rainbow body, 68
<i>rjes dran drug</i>	six subsequent recollections, 67 n. 208
<i>brjod (du) med, brjod bral</i>	ineffable, 81; 127
<i>nyams</i>	experience, 46 n. 123
<i>nyams len pa</i>	practitioner, 139 n. 1
<i>nyon mongs med pa</i>	devoid of afflictions, 60 n. 178
<i>gnyis med</i>	'not two', non-dual, 44; 60 n. 180; 62; 117; 251; 253; 255; 259; 267
<i>gnyis (su) med (pa)</i>	non-duality, without duality, 45; 56; 57; 123; 175 n. 4; 181; 203; 209; 211; 221 n. 3; 227; 241; 255

<i>mnyam (pa)</i>	equal, equalized, 63; 195; 203
<i>mnyam pa, mnyam nyid</i>	equality, 63; 117; 137; 197; 225; 231; 249
<i>mnyam pa gcig</i>	single equality, 203
<i>mnyam pa chen po</i>	great equality, 155
<i>mnyam pa'i rgyal po</i>	king of equality, 205
<i>mnyam pa'i ngang</i>	the Condition of equality, 251
<i>mnyam pa'i don</i>	the state of equality, 205
<i>rnying ma</i>	the Old School of Tibetan Buddhism, 10 n. 3; 21; 23; 33; 37; 38; 41 n. 108
<i>rnying ma pa</i>	doctrinal systems and followers of the Old School, 21; 24; 24 n. 40; 34
<i>snyan rgyud</i>	the Aural transmission, (one of the three Bonpo systems of the Great Perfection, originating from Zhang Zhung), 26; 35; 79 n. 1
<i>snying rje</i>	loving kindness, 83; 149; 241
<i>snying thig</i>	system of transmission of <i>rDzogs chen</i> teachings developed within the <i>rNying ma</i> tradition, 41 n. 108
<i>snying po</i>	quintessence, 243; 245; 267
<i>ti se</i>	Mount Kailash, 18
<i>ting nge 'dzin</i>	meditative absorption, 48; (eighty components of -), 52
<i>ting nge 'dzin (gyi) dgongs pa</i>	meditative contemplation, 87

<i>gtan tshigs</i>	cause (of being), 123 n. 1; 253; 255
<i>gtan tshigs gsum</i>	the three causes, 123
<i>gti mug</i>	stupidity, (one of the five poisons), 53 n. 157
<i>gter ma</i>	treasure text, 20 n. 19; 27 n. 47; 30; 39; 45; 45 n. 121; 52 n. 153; 66 n. 205; 165
<i>gter shad</i>	the mark of separation between verses or sentences found in treasure texts, (ཁྱ), 167
<i>rtaḡ pa</i>	eternity, 209
<i>rtaḡ pa('i lta ba)</i>	the eternalist view, eternalism, 113 n. 1; 147 n. 2; 227; 229; 251; 255
<i>rtaḡs</i>	token, 56; 83; 93; 205
<i>rtog pa med (pa)</i>	without conceptuality, 267
<i>rtogs pa</i>	realization, 40; 48; 51; 60; 68; 103 n. 2; 137; 139; 181
<i>lta ba</i>	view, 17; 37; 39; 40; 41; 43; 46; 46 n. 122; 47; 51 n. 145; 61; 67
<i>lta (blta) ru (rgyu) med (pa)</i>	without investigation, 91; 179; 193; 195; 269
<i>stag gzig</i>	a country traditionally situated in the West, from where Bonpo teachings are said to have been introduced in Zhang Zhung, and through the latter brought into Tibet, 18; 27
<i>stong pa</i>	empty, 57; 60; 61; 65; 95; 121; 123; 125; 205 n. 1
<i>stong pa (nyid)</i>	emptiness, 57; 59; 60 n. 180; 62; 85 n. 1; 93 n. 2; 111 n. 2; 113; 117; 181; 183; 185 n. 2; 227; 251; 257

<i>ston pa</i>	teacher, (also, <i>the Teacher</i> , i.e. gShen rab Mi bo che), 18; 34 n. 76; 87
<i>brten 'gyur</i>	the Bonpo <i>corpus</i> of commentaries and doctrinal treatises related to the canonical scriptures, 31 n. 67
<i>bstan du med pa</i>	without description, 267
<i>thar pa</i>	liberation, 68
<i>thig le (1)</i>	Essence, 65; 261; 263; 265
<i>thig le (2)</i>	sphere, 60 n. 180; 217 n. 2
<i>thig le nyag gcig</i>	Single Essence, 54; 60 n. 180; 79; 93; 95; 97; 101; 107; 117; 119; 121; 125; 127; 129; 137; 139; 141; 153; 155; 157
<i>thugs</i>	Mind, 61; Heart, 55 n. 167; 103; 145; 169
<i>thugs rje</i>	compassion, 81; 83; 85; 87; 131; 151
<i>thugs rje'i ston pa</i>	the Compassionate Teacher, (i.e. gShen lha 'Od dkar), 40; 49; 81; 169
<i>thugs nyid</i>	the Heart itself, the Mind-Itself, 55 n. 167
<i>theg pa (rim) dgu</i>	the Nine Vehicles, (one of the two main classifications of Bonpo tenets), 21; 32; 34; 45 n. 121; 141; 153
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<i>lhun (gyis) grub (pa), lhun grub</i>	spontaneous accomplishment, 56; 58; 139; spontaneously accomplished, 44; 53; 55; 58; 65; 91; 101; 107; 175; 197; 205; 223; 227 n. 1; 245
<i>lhun rdzogs</i>	spontaneous perfection, spontaneously perfected, 45; 91; 101; 131
<i>lhun rdzogs chen po</i>	great, spontaneous perfection, 131; 133; 135
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<i>lho brag ma'i skor</i>	the cycles of the <i>bsGrags pa skor gsum</i> and <i>Yang rtse klong chen</i> discovered by gZhod ston dNgos grub Grags pa, 27 n. 47

<i>a dkar gyi theg pa</i>	the Vehicle of the White A, (the Seventh Vehicle, third Vehicle of the Fruit), 20 n. 19; 46 n. 127; 133 n. 2
<i>a khrid</i>	one of the three Bonpo systems of transmission of the Great Perfection, 26; 34
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<i>a khrid thun mtshams bco lnga brgyad bcu pa</i>	the fifteen retreat-sessions of the <i>A khrid</i> , (meditative training system developed by Bru chen rGyal ba g.Yung drung (1242-1290) as a simplified form of the <i>a khrid thun mtshams brgyad bcu pa</i>), 26
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1. For the sake of convenience, Tibetan terms appearing in the text and in the notes will not be preceded by the abbreviation 'Tib.'; non-Tibetan terms will instead be specified as to their linguistic origin. Further, Tibetan textual sources will be referred to by their full or abridged titles, author's name and page number(s). Articles and books in Western languages will be referred to by author's name, year of publication, and whenever deemed appropriate, page number(s). Complete bibliographic references are given in the relevant sections, pp. 273-278 and pp. 278-296 respectively.

2. He belongs to the prestigious Ya ngal lineage of Dolpo, Nepal. For the latter, see the *rGyal gsen ya nial gyi gduñ rabs un chen tshañs pa'i sgra dbyañs* by Yang sgom Mi 'gyur rGyal mtshan, pp. 1-135.

3. The following information about his life was provided by dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma himself: he was born on the 12th day of the 1st Tibetan month of the year 1963 in Dolpo (for an account about Dolpo see D. L. Snellgrove 1967b). His father was bsTan 'dzin bSam sgrub, his mother bsTan 'dzin chos sgron; she was a *rNying ma* devotee, as was his uncle. When he was young, his name was Tshe dbang sTag lha, a name that he retained until the age of fourteen (1975). According to the tradition of the Ya ngal teachers (*Yang ston pa*), the male spiritual descendants, who are styled *sngags pa*, are supposed to practise in retreat for three years, whereby they engage themselves in preliminary practices (*sngon 'gro*), the practices of the five Yi dam (*yi dam mchog lnga*) of the *Bon* religion (for which see p. 133, n. 1), the practice of mind-consciousness transfer (*'pho ba*) and so on. For what concerns female spiritual descendants, they normally get acquainted with the teachings by residing in or having some degree of interaction with nunneries for a certain period of time. The monastery where Tshe dbang sTag lha pursued his training is named sTar rdzong phun tshogs gling; it is situated south of Tshwa dga' (or Sa dga') and east of bSam gling monastery, of which it represents a branch. Until 1978 Tshe dbang sTag lha lived in Dolpo, while in 1979 he moved to Dolanji, India, where he took the full monastic ordination and was subsequently given the name of 'Phrin las Nyi ma. In 1989 he obtained the *dGe bshes* degree. From 1989 to 1992 he was a philosophy teacher at the Dolanji *Bon po* Dialectic School. In 1992 he acquired the title of sMan ri'i dPon slob. At present he mainly teaches philosophy and other aspects of the *Bon* religion. He also travels to various areas, including Mustang, to perform rituals according to the requests of Tibetan *Bon po* believers.

1. The religious phenomenon of Bon has been researched by Western scholars since the end of the last century. See e.g. S. C. Das 1881; B. Laufer 1901; H. Hoffmann 1950; R. A. Stein 1962, pp. 193-210; G. Uray 1964; D. Snellgrove 1967a, which also contains a summarized discussion by Western scholars around the term *bon* and the adjective *bon po* (p. 1, n. 1; p. 20, n. 2); R. A. Stein 1971a; S. G. Karmay 1975a; P. Kværne 1976; G. Tucci 1980, pp. 213-248, where he states (p. 213): "The Bon religion is the indigenous religion of Tibet, which despite all the influences of Buddhism has preserved itself until the present day." Discussions concerning Bon as the indigenous or 'pre-Buddhist' religion of Tibet are found in R. A. Stein 1985a and R. A. Stein 1988. See also T. Skorupski 1990, pp. 273-278; D. Martin 1994, pp. 4-12 in particular. For a fairly recent survey of research on the Bon religion see P. Kværne 1994. For a state-of-the-art discussion about the way in which Western scholars have viewed Bon see P. Kværne 1995, pp. 9-10; cf. the chapter "*Bon dang bon po*" in N. Namkhai 1994, pp. 509-519. D. Martin has compiled a bibliography of all works and articles published so far on the Bon religion.

3. See P. Kværne 1989 and also P. Kværne 1995, p. 17. Cf. N. Namkhai 1996, pp. 47-78.

4. According to D. L. Snellgrove and H. Richardson 1968, p. 99, sTag gzig is "vaguely identifiable with Persia." According to G. Tucci 1980, p. 214, sTag gzig is "a name which in Tibetan literature refers to the Iranian (or Iranian-speaking) world". Cf. E. Haarh 1968, p. 9; D. Snellgrove 1987, p. 388 et seq.; P. Kværne 1995, pp. 14-17. On the question of the geographical and sacred origins of Bon, see D. Martin 1998.

2. This definition of Bon as 'Everlasting' (*g.yung drung*) does not seem to have been used before the tenth century A.D. Cf. S. G. Karmay 1975a, p. 172.

5. See S. G. Karmay 1972, p. 21 et seq.

6. See N. Namkhai and R. Prats 1989.

7. See D. L. Snellgrove and H. Richardson 1968, p. 26; S. G. Karmay 1972, p. xxx; G. Tucci 1980, p. 214; P. Kværne 1995, pp. 13-14.

8. See E. Haarh 1968. Cf. the chapter "*Zhang zhung dang bod*" in N. Namkhai 1994, p. 519 et seq.

9. Cf. p. 79, n. 2.

12. See e.g. G. Tucci 1980 and D. Snellgrove 1987.

13. For which see below, p. 31, n. 67.

14. Cf. e.g. G. Tucci 1980, p. 224.

15. Cf. e.g. D. L. Snellgrove and H. Richardson 1968, pp. 109-110.

16. P. Kværne 1995, p. 13.

10. About Zhang Zhung see also G. Tucci 1956, pp. 71-75; R. A. Stein 1959, p. 28; G. Uray 1985; L. Petech 1988, pp. 269-270 and pp. 271-272; K. Cech 1992.

11. Cf. S. G. Karmay 1972, p. 94, n. 2.

17. Cf. M. Eliade 1958, p. 26, where speaking about the dialectic of the sacred he states: "The attitude which I have labelled idolatrous is based (whether consciously or not hardly matters) on this view of *all* [his italics] hierophanies as being part of a whole. It would preserve the older hierophanies, by according them value on a different religious level, and the performance of a function there."

18. See P. Kværne 1990c, pp. 114-119 and G. Coleman 1993, pp. 208-210. Cf. P. Kværne 1995, p. 22.

19. The Nine Vehicles of Bon are divided into the so-called Four Vehicles of the Cause (*rgyu'i theg pa bzhi*) and Five Vehicles of the Fruit (*'bras bu'i theg pa lnga*). The Four Vehicles of the Cause are: the Vehicle of the gShen of Prediction (*phywa gshen gyi theg pa*), of the gShen of Appearance (*snang gshen gyi theg pa*), of the gShen of Magic (*'phrul gshen gyi theg pa*), and of the gShen of Existence (*srid gshen gyi theg pa*). The first vehicle is concerned with divination, astrology, diagnostics, healing methods and rituals; the Second is concerned with protection, ransom and exorcism; the Third is concerned with overcoming and elimination of hostile forces; and the Fourth with funerary ritual. For these cf. N. Namkhai 1995. The Five Vehicles of the Fruit are: the Vehicles of Virtuous Devotees (*dge bsnyen gyi theg pa*), of Ascetics (*drang srong gi theg pa*), of the White A (*a dkar gyi theg pa*), of the Primordial gShen (*ye gshen gyi theg pa*), and the Unsurpassable Supreme One (*yang rtse bla med kyi theg pa*). They are respectively

concerned with rules of conducts and religious practices for lay believers (Fifth Vehicle); rules for fully ordained persons (Sixth Vehicle); tantric practices based on meditative transformation processes (Seventh Vehicle); tantric practices based on the Generation (*bskyed rim*) and Perfection (*rdzogs rim*) stages of meditation (Eighth Vehicle); and the teachings of the Great Perfection (Ninth Vehicle). See D. Snellgrove 1967; P. Kværne 1974, Part One, p. 26; K. Mimaki 1994a and 1994b. Cf. J. Hackin 1924, pp. 31-32; G. Tucci 1949, pp. 109-110. A detailed analysis of the classification of the Nine Vehicles according to the tradition of treasure texts (*gter ma*) is found in a work by Shar rdza bKra shis rGyal mtshan (1859-1934) entitled *Lung rig rin po che'i mdzod blo gsal snying gi nor*, for which cf. S. G. Karmay 1977, p. 171. See also dPal ldan Tshul khriims (1902-1973) *Sangs rgyas g.yung drung bon gyi bstan pa'i 'byung ba brjod pa'i legs bshad bskal pa bzang po'i mgrin rgyan* (hereafter *g. Yung drung bon gyi bstan 'byung*), pp. 393-396.

20. See the *Dam pa'i chos kyi 'khor lo bsgyur ba rnams kyi byung ba gsal bar byed pa mkhas pa'i dga' ston* (abbr. *Chos byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston*) by dPa' bo gTsug lag Phreng ba (1504-1566), pp. 537-651; Dudjom Rinpoche and Jigdrel Yeshe Dorje 1991. See also N. Namkhai 1985; R. Prats 1985; F.-K. Ehrhard 1992; J.-L. Achard 1995 and 1998.

21. To name but one, the Fifth Dalai Lama Ngag dbang Blo bzang rGya mtsho (1617-1682), also known as 'the Great Fifth'. For his hagiography see E. Dargyay 1977, p. 169 et seq. Cf. S. G. Karmay 1988b. The non-sectarian tradition (*ris med pa*) which flourished in Eastern Tibet during the late 19th century was also very much inspired by the doctrinal tenets of the Great Perfection; for this see E. G. Smith 1970.

22. Cf. D. Snellgrove 1967, p. 15; G. Tucci 1980, p. 6; P. Kværne 1983, pp. 367-368; S. G. Karmay 1988a, p. ix; P. Kværne and T. K. Rikhey 1996, pp. ix-x.

24. Cf. D. Snellgrove 1985, pp. 1354-1359. See also Chou Yi-Liang 1945, Y. S. Hakeda 1967, A. Wayman 1973 and P. Williams 1989. S. G. Karmay (1988a, pp. 41-85) analyzes and translates three documents of Dunhuang, suggesting that they may be considered as "prototypes of the later literature of the rDzogs chen tradition". One of these texts, the *sBas pa'i rgum chung*, has also been edited by N. Namkhai (1984), who provides comments and explanations on specific terms found in the original text.

25. We refer in particular to the doctrine of the Basis-consciousness (Skr. *ālaya-vijñāna*) as developed within the Yogācāra school, which flourished in India during the fourth century A.D. Cf. discussion below, p. 52 et seq. See K. Mimaki 1982; L. Schmithausen 1987; P. Williams 1989, pp. 77-95; G. Dreyfus & C. Lindtner 1989; G. M. Nagao 1991a; G. M. Nagao 1992; K. Mimaki 1993. Cf. S. D. Ruegg 1980. The theory of the Basis-consciousness has been the object of close philosophical investigation by the well-known teacher and scholar Tsong kha pa Blo bzang Grags Pa (1357-1419) in his work *Yid dang kun gzhi'i dka' ba'i gnas rgya cher 'grel pa legs par bshad pa'i rgya mtsho*. This text has been translated and annotated by G. Sparham (1993). See also D. Snellgrove 1987, p. 398; S. G. Karmay 1988a, p. 178 et seq. Cf. D. Germano 1992, p. 5.

23. See S. G. Karmay 1988a, p. ix. Cf. H. V. Guenther 1983.

26. See. M. Eliade 1985.

27. See W. Johnston 1973, p. 183.

28. There is no certainty as to when dGa' rab rDo rje actually lived. His name is known from at least the tenth century A.D., since it appears in Tibetan sources such as the *bSam gtan mig sgron* by gNubs chen Sangs rgyas Ye shes (for which see S. G. Karmay 1988a, *passim*). Detailed accounts about dGa' rab rDo rje and the propagation of his teachings are provided by Zhang ston bKra shis rDo rje (1097-1167)—for whom see S. G. Karmay 1988a, p. 209, n. 16 and p. 211—in his *rDzogs pa chen po snying thig gi lo rgyus chen mo*, p. 581 et seq. The historian dPa' bo gTsug lag Phreng ba (1504-1566) in his *Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston*, op. cit., p. 565 et seq., states that dGa' rab rDo rje was born about three hundred and sixty years after the Nirvāṇa of Buddha Śākyamuni; (for a discussion about the dates of the Buddha's Nirvāṇa see H. Bechert 1991, pp. 1-23 and pp. 222-236 in particular). Cf. the preface of N. Namkhai to G. Orofino 1990, p. 5 (and the same in the original Italian edition of 1985, pp. 13-14). A. W. Hanson-Barber 1984, pp. 36-38, places dGa' rab rDo rje in the middle of the sixth century A.D. For an account of his life, see E. Dargyay 1977, pp. 19-20 and S. G. Karmay 1988a, p. 19. See also R. Prats 1978, pp. 200-201. For a brief discussion about the Indic original of his name, see D. Germano 1992, p. 4. For the term *Uddiyāna*, see L. Chandra 1980 and G. Tucci 1980, p. 29.

29. For whom see G. Tucci 1949, p. 198, n. 159; p. 257; p. 381; and p. 611, n. 3; E. Dargyay 1977, *passim*; R. M. Davidson 1981, p. 9, n. 23; L. O. Gómez 1983; F. Faber 1985; F. Faber 1989. Cf. Tulku Thondup Rinpoche 1995, pp. 68-73.

30. For whom see e.g. G. C. Toussaint 1933; A.-M. Blondeau 1971 and 1985; S. G. Karmay 1988a, *passim*. See also U. Loseries 1989. For a traditional account of his life and deeds see T. Thondup Rinpoche 1995, pp. 74-108.

31. See R. Prats 1978, p. 204 et seq.; S. G. Karmay 1988a, pp. 17-37; S. G. Karmay 1985, pp. 272-282. See also E. Dargyay 1985, pp. 283-293. Cf. Tulku Thondup Rinpoche 1995, pp. 103-105.

32. Cf. S. G. Karmay 1972, p. 23.

33. Cf. S. G. Karmay 1972, p. 151. For a discussion about his exile to Eastern Tibet see S. G. Karmay 1988a, pp. 26-29. For the diffusion of the Great Perfection teachings in Tibet according to the Bon religion see below, p. 26 et seq.

34. Cf. M. Lalou 1952; A. Macdonald 1971; R. A. Stein 1980; G. Uray 1983; S. G. Karmay 1981 and S. G. Karmay 1983.

35. See S. G. Karmay 1975b. Cf. M. Kapstein 1985.

36. For his dates see G. N. Roerich 1949, p. 317. Cf. L. W. J. van der Kuijp 1986, p. 203, where the dates given are 1402-1472.

37. *rNying ma dang bon gyi rnam gzhag*, *Collected works of sPyan snga ba Blo gros rGyal mtshan*, Ngawang Gelek Demo, New Delhi 1982, vol. 5, pp. 459-466.

38. *rdzogs chen a ma na se'i chos skor brdzus ma brtsams* / *ibid.*, p. 464,3.

39. *rgyud gsang ba snying po kho na nges pa'i rgyud sogs bsgyur* / *ibid.*, p. 460,3. On this *tantra* and the issue of banned doctrines see S. G. Karmay 1980a and 1980b; see also S. G. Karmay, 1988a, p. ix and pp. 139-140.

40. *rgyal po srong btsan sgam po yan bon med / de nas rang bzo byas bon byung / khri srong sde [sic] btsan dus su hwa shang bskrang kyang slob ma 'gas rdzogs chen brtsams / de la brkus nas bon gyis theg pa rim dgu brtsams / ibid.*, p. 465,2-3. Cf. M. Lalou 1939, 1953; P. Demiéville 1952, 1970, 1973, 1979; Y. Imaeda 1975; R. Kimura 1981. See also PT 116, fols. 171,1-173,2 and fols. 186,4-187,4 in A. Spanien and Y. Imaeda 1979; S. G. Karmay 1988a, pp. 86-106. Traditional polemics surrounding the *rNying ma pas* and the Bonpos have been the object of quite an extensive and significant literary production. However this question is not elaborated here, since it is not immediately relevant to the doctrines studied. For a most interesting and detailed study concerning the traditional polemics that developed around the Bon religion, see D. Martin 1991. Cf. S. C. Das 1881. Misleading doctrinal identifications have also been attributed *a priori* to the Great Perfection. For example Giuseppe Tucci, following a Tibetan polemical tradition, assumed the presence of Chan elements in the *rDzogs pa chen po*. (See G. Tucci 1958, pp. 21, 45, 60 et seq.; cf. R. A. Stein 1971b and R. A. Stein 1972, p. 23, n. 3). However, on the basis of further research, Samten G. Karmay concluded that: "Even though in rDzogs-chen there may be parallel ideas and practices to those of the Chan, rDzogs-chen must be considered as of Indo-Tibetan origin whilst the tradition of Chan in Tibet may be studied as an independent tradition." (See S. G. Karmay 1975a, p. 215). When addressing the same question, Per Kværne keenly observed: "Tucci, in spite of his repeated assertions (Tucci 1958, pp. 21, 45, 60) that Ch'an elements are to be found in Rdzogs-chen, nowhere demonstrates that these elements must necessarily, or even preferably, be interpreted as emanating from Ch'an." (See P. Kværne 1983, p. 384). Cf. B. Faure 1991.

41. See below, p. 34. Cf. S. G. Karmay 1977, pp. 111-112.

42. The cycle has been reproduced as the *Bla med rdzogs pa chen po yan rtse kloñ chen gyi khrid gzun cha lag dai bcas pa'i gsum pod*, Sherab Wangyal, TBMC, New Delhi, 1973, 2 vols. (hereafter *rDzogs pa chen po Yang rtse klong chen*). Cf. S. G. Karmay 1977, pp. 103-106; S. G. Karmay 1988a, pp. 201-202; P. Kværne 1974, p. 111 and p. 139; P. Kværne 1983, p. 369.

43. For whom see *infra* p. 40, *passim*. For iconographic description see P. Kværne 1995, pp. 25-26, 42-43, 63-64. The cycle has been reproduced as the *rDzogs pa chen po zab lam gnad kyi gdams pa bsgrags pa skor gsum ma bu cha lag dai bcas pa*, Patshang Lama Sonam Gyaltzen, TBMC, New Delhi, 1973 (hereafter *rDzogs chen bsGrags pa skor gsum*).

44. Cf. P. Kværne 1971, paragraphs (31) p. 225, (49) p. 227 and (55) pp. 227-228; see also S. G. Karmay 1972, p. 4, n. 1 and pp. 20, 26, 56-57.

45. Cf. various references in S. G. Karmay 1972, and also dPal ldan Tshul khriṃs (1902-1973), *g.Yung drung bon gyi bstan 'byung*, op. cit., pp. 369-377.

46. The date of this textual discovery is uncertain. The Chronological Table of the sMan ri Abbot Nyi ma bsTan 'dzin (1813-1875), *Sangs rgyas kyi bstan rtsis ngo mtshar nor bu'i phreng*, gives the date 1088 (see P. Kværne 1971, p. 230, par. (87)). Cf. A.-M. Blondeau 1984, p. 89 et seq.; P. Kværne 1988, p. 242. See the *Sangs rgyas bstan pa spyi yi 'byung khung yid bzhiṃ nor bu 'dod pa 'jo ba'i gter mdzod* by Rig 'dzin Kun grol Grags pa (b. 1700), p. 318,1-14; (for Kun grol Grags pa's year of birth cf. A.-M. Blondeau 1984, p. 109, n. 108, where 1718 and not 1700, as inferred from the Chronological Table of Nyi ma bsTan 'dzin, is suggested as being the correct date.) See also *g.Yung drung bon gyi bstan 'byung*, op. cit., pp. 201,5-204,5; S. G. Karmay 1972, pp. 154-156; S. G. Karmay 1977, p. 102; P. Kværne 1983, p. 369; S. G. Karmay 1988a, pp. 201-202, 220.

47. The discovery of both cycles, which is also known as the *lHo brag ma'i skor*, is classified as Central Treasure (*dBus gter*). For the threefold classification of Bonpo treasure texts (*gter ma*) see S. G. Karmay 1972, pp. 190-191. For a short description of the lineage holders, the reason for and the way in which the hiding of the Cycle of the Three Proclamations was carried out, see the colophon of the *Sems don sde bcu'i skor* (text listed in P. Kværne 1974 as K 111, B:6, p. 112, and in S. G. Karmay 1977, as no. 54 (B) 28, p. 101), *rDzogs chen bsGrags pa skor gsum*, pp. 474,2-475,6, and BKSr, vol. 109, pp. 131,1-132,4.

48. For a list of texts pertaining to this cycle see S. G. Karmay 1977, pp. 100-103. Cf. P. Kværne 1974, Part Two, pp. 111-112. For the transmission lineage of the Three Proclamations and the biographies of related teachers see *g.Yung drung bon gyi bstan 'byung*, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 369 et seq. For a discussion and analysis of these two cycles see A.-M. Blondeau 1984, pp. 109-118.

54. See the *rDzogs pa chen po zhang zhunḡ snyan rgyud kyi bon ma nub pa'i gtan tshigs*, *rDzogs pa chen po Zhang zhunḡ snyan rgyud*, section Pa, pp. 259-267, translated in D. L. Snellgrove and H. Richardson 1968, p. 101 et seq. Cf. S. G. Karmay 1972, pp. 97-99.

55. The BKSr, vol. 110, pp. 328-380 contains a text entitled *rDzogs pa chen po zhang zhunḡ snyan rgyud kyi spyi don gsal ba'i sgron ma* by a Tshe dbang Rig 'dzin, which is also a genealogy of the Zhang Zhunḡ Aural Transmission teachers, and which seems to have been written after the above-mentioned *Biographies* of sPa ston, given that references are made to the latter's work (p. 380,6) as being one of the main sources utilized by the author for his compilation. This text represents an interesting source for comparative study.

49. Cf. S. G. Karmay 1988a, p. 203.

50. S. G. Karmay (1972, p. 24, n. 4) states that sPa bsTan was a contemporary of Bru chen rGyal ba g.Yung drung (1242-1290). The work was written in the Earth-Pig Year, i.e., 1299 (according to S. G. Karmay 1977, p. 94) or 1419 (according to S. G. Karmay 1988a, p. 203 and p. 234).

51. SPS, vol. 73, New Delhi 1968, Section Ka, pp. 1-130. (the volume contains the whole cycle of the *Zhang zhung snyan rgyud* (hereafter *rDzogs pa chen po Zhang zhung snyan rgyud*).

52. Ibid., p. 26,1: *de ltar nyi shu rtsa bzhi ni / gong mas 'og ma la yi ge ris su ma bstan zhing / tshig gis snyan du brgyud de //*

53. Ibid., p. 30,5: *bon zhang zhung snyan rgyud gter du ma nub //*

56. The *rGyud bu chung bcu gnyis* which we have translated and critically edited belongs to this section. See p. 39, *passim*.

57. For these terms see below, p. 43, *passim*.

58. For a list of all the texts associated with the *Zhang zhung snyan rgyud* cycle found in SPS vol. 73, see S. G. Karmay 1977, pp. 94-97. Cf. P. Kværne 1974, Part Two, pp. 109-111. See also T. Wangyal 1993, pp. 209-212.

59. See P. Kværne 1971, par. (41), p. 226; various references in S. G. Karmay 1972; A.-M. Blondeau 1985, pp. 132-143. For the transmission lineage see the *sPyi rgyud ye khri mtha' sel gyi lo rgyus chen mo*, TBMC, Dolanji, n.d., pp. 759-815. For the whole cycle see BKSr, vol. 101. The *Ye khri mtha' sel* is included in the inventory of the Bonpo Canon by Nyi ma bsTan 'dzin (1813-1875)—cf. P. Kværne 1974, K 112, p. 112—as well as in that compiled by Kun grol Grags pa (b. 1700), section Cha, p. 223; but it is notably absent in the *dkar chag* of g.Yung drung Tshul khrims dBang grags, which was composed after that of Nyi ma bsTan 'dzin (cf. P. Kværne 1974, p. 22). See below, p. 32, n. 71.

60. For his dates, cf. P. Kværne 1971, par. (87), p. 230; S. G. Karmay 1972, p. 115, and S. G. Karmay 1977, p. 11.

61. See D. Martin 1991, pp. 224-305; P. Kværne 1971, par. (68), (72) and (75), p. 229; S. G. Karmay 1972, pp. 126 et seq. The *Gab pa dgu skor* has been published by TBMC in *po ti* form, New Delhi, 1967, fols. 1-87. It is listed in P. Kværne 1974, p. 111 as K 109, and in S. G. Karmay 1977, p. 99 as no. 52; it has been reprinted in the BKSR, vol. 99, pp. 10-96.

62. See the *Khro bo dbang chen ngo mtshar rgyas pa'i rnam bshad gsal ba'i sgron ma* by sKyabs ston Rin chen 'Od zer (b. 1353; cf. S. G. Karmay 1972, p. 126, n. 2, and S. G. Karmay 1977, p. 22), contained in the *sPyi spungs khro bo dbang chen gyi 'grel pa dang dbal phur spyi don nyi shu rtsa lnga'i 'grel pa*, Yongzin Sangyay Tenzin, TBMC, New Delhi, 1973; see also the *dkar chag* of Nyi ma bsTan 'dzin, p. 8. Cf. D. Martin 1994, p. 26, n. 99.

63. Cf. S. G. Karmay 1977, p. 99.

65. See S. G. Karmay 1972, pp. xxxi-xxxiii; P. Kværne 1990a, p. 209.

66. Cf. S. G. Karmay 1975a, pp. 187-189.

70. For which see D. Snellgrove 1967, pp. 16-19. See also the '*Dul ba gling grags*, *Sources for a History of Bon*, TBMC, Dolanji, 1972, p. 119,6.

71. At present four main catalogues of the Bonpo Canon are available: the first is the one compiled by Rig 'dzin Kun grol Grags pa (b. 1700), *Zab dang rgya che g.yung drung bon gyi bka' 'gyur dkar chag nyi ma 'bum gyi 'od zer* (Krung go'i Bod gyi Shes rig dPe skrun khang, Xining, 1993). The second is the work of Nyi ma bsTan 'dzin (1813-1875), *bKa' 'gyur brten 'gyur gyi sde can sgrigs tshul bstan pa'i me ro spar ba'i rlung g.yab bon gyi pad mo rgyas byed nyi 'od*, SPS, vol. 37, part II, New Delhi, 1965, for the study of which we refer to P. Kværne 1974. The most detailed one is that written by g.Yung drung Tshul khri ms dBang grags (nineteenth century), *rGyal ba'i bka' dang bka' rten rmad 'byung dgos 'dod yid bzhin gter gyi bang mdzod la dkar chags* [sic] *blo'i tha ram bkrol byed 'phrul gyi lde mi g* (Bod ljongs Shin hwa Par 'debs bZö grwa, Bod gсар ton yig <93>, no. 019, n.d.), which according to its colophon (p. 1390) was completed in the Iron-Dragon Male Year (*lcags pho 'brug*), probably 1880; the latest one, *g.Yung drung bon gyi bka' 'gyur glog par ma'i dkar chag*, Si khron Zhing chen Mi rigs Zhib 'jug su'o Bod kyi Rig gnas Zhib 'jug khang, 1985, was published when the late Bla ma A g.Yung undertook the first reprint of the Bonpo Canon. We shall note here that in their catalogues, Rig 'dzin Kun grol Grags pa and g.Yung drung Tshul khri ms dBang grags refer to the *rGyud* and *mDzod* sections of the Canon as the Section of Formulas (*sngags sde*), and the Mind Section (*sems sde*) respectively.

67. See P. Kværne 1974; S. G. Karmay 1975a, pp. 187-190; S. G. Karmay 1990; P. Kværne 1996, pp. 140-143. Cf. M. Kapstein 1989. So far there have been two reprints of the Bonpo *bKa' gyur*, both carried out during the 1980s in Eastern Tibet (present Sichuan Province): the first one (1985) consists of 157 *po ti* volumes printed on cream-coloured paper and tied between red boards; the second one (1989) consists of 192 *po ti* volumes. The first reprint was supervised by g.Yung drung bsTan pa'i rGyal mtshan, also known as Bla ma A g.Yung (b. 1922 at Nyag rong rdzong khong, passed away in 1998); the second one by Bla ma Bon sleb Nam mkha' bsTan 'dzin from rTogs ldan monastery in A mdo rNga ba, and was sponsored by a businessman of the Hui Islamic minority converted to Bon. The Bonpo *bKa' gyur* and *brTen gyur* have been respectively republished under the supervision of sMon rgyal Lha sras Rinpoche and sPrul sKu bsTan pa'i Nyi ma, in 178 and 380 volumes. Cf. "g.Yung drung bon gyi bka' gyur", *Bon sgo*, Bon Cultural Centre, Dolanji, 1987, No. 1, pp. 24-34. Six reprints of the *bKa' gyur* are at present available in the West: two are preserved at the library of the Shang Shung Institute at Arcidosso, Italy (first and second reprint), one at the Centre d'Études Tibétaines in Paris (second reprint), one at the University of Oslo (second reprint), one at the Library of Congress (first reprint), one at the University of Washington, Seattle (second reprint). One set has also been acquired by the TBMC.

68. For the structure of the Bonpo Canon see P. Kværne 1974, Part One, pp. 23-27.

64. See e.g. J. Gyatso 1996. Cf. Tulku Thondup Rinpoche 1986.

69. Cf. P. Kværne 1974, Part One, p. 24.

72. S. G. Karmay 1988a.

73. As an example of how much this kind of literature is becoming popular in the West, one may refer to the numerous titles listed in one of the recent Snow Lion Publications catalogues, Ithaca, New York.

74. S. G. Karmay addresses the Great Perfection doctrines in the Bon religion in 1975a, pp. 213-215, and 1988a, pp. 201-205.

75. The text was orally transmitted to Blo ldan sNying po (b. 1360) by sTang chen dMu tsha Gyer med (eighth century; see S. G. Karmay 1972, p. 4, n. 1). Cf. the relevant section of the *gZi brjid* entitled *Bla med kyi theg pa'i don gtan la phab pa'i mdo*, in BKSr, vol. 4, pp. 111-144. It has been reproduced in twelve volumes by the Bonpo Foundation, New Delhi, 1967-1969, on the basis of a manuscript preserved at the monastery of bSam gling in Dolpo, Nepal, which was the source used by Lopon Tenzin Namdak and D. Snellgrove.

76. See D. Snellgrove 1967, pp. 3-9. P. Kværne (1986) has carried out a detailed analysis of the contents of the *gZi brjid*, concurrently with a study of a set of Bonpo paintings depicting the life of sTon pa gShen rab Mi bo che. See also R. A. Stein 1988, p. 43 et seq. and Tr. Sangye Tandar and R. Guard 1992.

77. See D. Snellgrove 1967, pp. 226-255.

78. The work has been revised by P. Kværne with the collaboration of T. Rikey, and published by the LTWA in 1996.

79. See op. cit., Part One, p. 23.

80. Prism press, Bridport.

81. *Insegnamenti tibetani su morte e liberazione*, Edizioni Mediterranee, Rome, 1985.

82. For which see below, p. 68.

83. Diplôme de l'Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Paris.

84. See S. G. Karmay 1972, p. 152, n. 2, and p. 311,4 et seq.; S. G. Karmay 1977, p. 142. Cf. the *bsTan pa'i rnam bshad dar rgyas gsal ba'i sgron ma* by sPa ston bsTan rgyal bZang po, p. 746,4-7 (the date of composition of this work is not certain; according to S. G. Karmay 1977, p. 117, no. 22, it could be either 1285 or 1345, while according to S. G. Karmay 1988a, p. 233, it was composed in 1405). The Chronology of Nyi ma bsTan 'dzin (1813-1875) compiled in 1842, *Sang's rgyas kyi bstan rtsis ngo mtshar nor bu'i phreng*, is silent about this discovery (see P. Kvaerne 1971). The text has been published in a collection entitled *Gal mdo*, TBMC, New Delhi, 1972, pp. 47-129, and is also found in *rDzogs chen Grags pa skor gsum*, op. cit., pp. 731-799, as *gTan tshigs nges pa'i gal mdo*.

85. For his works see S. G. Karmay 1977, pp. 85, 171-183.

86. In this respect we think that nowadays it is no longer admissible, from a general scholarly viewpoint, that the role of the Bon religion vis-à-vis the historical and religious developments in Tibet be underestimated or ignored. Hundreds of inedited Bonpo sources contained in the reprints of the Bonpo Canon presently accessible in the West await serious comparative study.

87. Generally speaking, we do not think that using Sanskrit to render Tibetan doctrinal or philosophical terms when presenting a translation of a Tibetan source in a Western language is a philologically appropriate solution, although the terms in questions may well be Tibetan translations or interpretations of notions originally formulated in Sanskrit. We also think that such a solution reflects an Indocentric approach towards Tibetan textual materials purported by Western scholarship that does not always render justice to the sources in question. The fact remains that certain given notions or concepts are expressed in Tibetan sources in Tibetan and not in Sanskrit; an effort to translate directly should not therefore be considered worthless or less prestigious. Cf. S. D. Ruegg 1992.

88. Cf. J. Baldick 1989, p. 5 and D. Germano 1992, p. iv.

89. Cf. P. Kvaerne 1983, p. 385, n. 2; É. Lamotte 1988; R. Thurman 1988, and M. Kapstein 1988.

90. In this work 'technical' terms will be capitalized and hyphenated when translated in English, while terms kept in the Tibetan original will appear in italics.

91. The textual appurtenance of the excerpts will be specified in due course during the presentation. Translations of the selected excerpts appearing in this Introduction will be preceded by the relevant transliteration.

92. His comments on specific terms and expressions appearing hereafter in the notes will be preceded by his name.

93. Hereafter The Twelve Little Tantras.

98. For this term see below, p. 55.

99. See p. 97, n. 4 and p. 129.

100. See p. 137.

101. See p. 133.

102. See pp. 141, 153.

103. See p. 159.

104. Cf. D. Snellgrove 1985, p. 1359 et seq.

94. See pp. 81-85.

95. See pp. 85-89.

97. See pp. 99-101.

96. See pp. 129-131.

108. For an analysis of the evolution of the *rDzogs chen sems sde* teachings into the more sophisticated and *Tantra*-oriented *sNying thig* system of the *rNying ma* tradition cf. D. Germano 1995.

105. See p. 169.

106. For which see below, p. 58.

107. For these see below, p. 52, *passim*.

109. "Noli fora ire, in te ipsum redi. In interiore homine habitat ueritas. Et si tuam naturam mutabilem inueneris, transcede et te ipsum. Sed memento, cum te transcendis, ratiocinantem animam te transcendere". *De Vera Religione*, XXXIX, 72, *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina*, vol. XXXII, Aurelii Augustini Opera, Pars IV, I, Turnholti, Typographi Brepols Editores Pontificii, 1962, p. 234. Translated in H. S. Burleigh 1968, p. 69.

110. Skr. *drīṣṭi*; cf. M. Monier-Williams 1986, p. 492.

111. Cf. The View which is like the Lion's Roar, section 'A, pp. 265-267. On the basis of such an understanding, we prefer not to circumscribe the characterization of this view as philosophical, metaphysical etc., but to refer to it as simply the View.

114. On this term cf. G. Tucci 1980, p. 82; p. 264, n. 28.

115. On the question of the Buddha essence (Skr. *tathāgatagarbha*) see D. S. Ruegg 1969; cf. L. Schmithausen 1973; see also P. Williams 1989, pp. 95-115; S. G. Karmay 1988a, pp. 87-88.

112. Cf. The View which is like the Lion's Roar, section Dza, p. 251.

113. See below, p. 52, *passim*.

116. See the *rDzogs chen bsGrags pa skor gsum*, pp. 278-282. Text listed as K 111, 5.iv = Nya (*lTa ba la shan sgron ma'i lun*) in P. Kværne 1974, p. 112, and as no. 54, 17 in S. G. Karmay 1977, p. 100.

117. Kun tu bZang po gShen lha 'Od dkar, see below, p. 49 et seq.

118. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: it is not found nor accomplished through the views and practices of the lower eight Vehicles of Bon, although it comprises them. See below, pp. 46-48; cf. The View which is like the Lion's Roar, section Cha, p. 205.

119. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: *gnas pa nyid* is an equivalent of *gnas lugs ji bzhin ma*, 'the Way of Being as it is.' For the latter term cf. p. 50 and p. 58.

120. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: *bon dang gshen rab med* = 'khor ba dang 'das pa med, "there is no transmigration nor state transcending suffering"; (gShen rab is representative of enlightened beings).

121. In the classification of the Bonpo teachings into Nine Vehicles given by the *gZi brjid* (see D. Snellgrove 1967) and maintained in the group of treasure texts known as the Southern Treasure (*lHo gter*), the teachings of the Great Perfection are considered part of the Five Vehicles of the Fruit (*'bras bu'i theg pa*). See the *g.Yung drung bon gyi bstan 'byung*, op. cit., p. 393 et seq. Cf. S. G. Karmay 1975a, p. 213. On the other hand, the contemporary Bonpo Lama A lags Bon brgya (b. 1935) whom we have once interviewed (see D. Rossi 1994) never referred to the Great Perfection as being the Fifth Vehicle of the Fruit; that seems to be in line, at least from a philosophical standpoint, with the transcendental character of the Great Perfection teachings that we find confirmed in this excerpt.

122. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: the View is the Condition of Kun tu bZang po (*kun tu bzang po'i ngang*, see below, p. 49). If one abides in that state, one's actions will be spontaneously consistent with it, without need for following specific rules such as those which are expected to be observed when one subscribes to the precepts expounded through the lower eight Vehicles. Cf. The Twelve Little Tantras, section Cha, p. 119.

123. That is to say, the state of the Great Perfection is not affected by thoughts nor by the experiences (*nyams*) that may arise through meditation practices. Cf. The Twelve Little Tantras, section Ca, pp. 115-117 and The View which is like the Lion's Roar, section Tsha, p. 245.

124. *nam mkha'i klong*. Depending on the context, the term *nam mkha'* can either be rendered as 'space' or as 'sky'. Cf. The Twelve Little Tantras, section Ja, p. 121. For other interpretations of the term *klong* see D. Snellgrove 1967, p. 262, n. 71 and G. Tucci 1980, p. 219. Cf. D. Germano 1992, p. 937.

128. The Vehicle of the Primordial *gShen* (*ye gshen gyi theg pa*), explaining the importance of following a qualified teacher, finding the right partners and auspicious sites for meditative practices, the correct preparation of *mandalas*, and the meditation practices involving the stages of Generation (*bskyed rim*) and Perfection (*rdzogs rim*). Cf. D. Snellgrove 1967, pp. 190-225.

125. Cf. The View which is like the Lions' Roar, section Tsha, p. 245.

126. Listed as K 111, section Na, 9 = 3. in P. Kværne 1974, p. 112, and as no. 54, 50 in S. G. Karmay 1977, p. 102.

127. The Vehicle of the White A (*a dkar gyi theg pa*), expounding *tantric* theories as well as meditative processes of transformation. Cf. D. Snellgrove 1967, pp. 170-189.

129. We have to remark that the text in question appears to be quite corrupted: the vowels *e* and *o* are often absent, as in the cases marked by an asterisk (*) throughout this quotation; it might be a matter of scribal mistakes or of effacement due to time and use of the manuscript. In any case however, the correct affix of the gerund after a final *d* should be *de* and not *te*.

130. See n. 129 above.

131. The practice of peaceful-abiding (*zhi gnas*) involves techniques of mental fixation, with or without an object, aimed at producing a calm state where thoughts are kept at bay; when that state of calm becomes progressively stable and natural, it evolves into that of superior seeing (*lhag mthong*), whereby one is able to meditate without being disturbed by the arising of thoughts. See T. Namdak 1992, p. 78. Cf. G. M. Nagao 1991b; L. O. Gómez 1983, p. 398.

132. For this term see below, p. 55, *passim*.

133. See the *rDzogs pa chen po Zhang zhung snyan rgyud*, section Cha, pp. 181-192. Listed in P. Kværne 1974, p. 110 (K 108, 4 = *Cha*), and in S. G. Karmay 1977, p. 94 (no. 50, Cha.)

135. Cf. the critical edition of the *rGyud bu chung bcu gnyis*, p. 86, 8-9.

136. See below, p. 59 et seq.

137. Ta pi Hri tsa or Ta pi Ra tsa, also called 'Od kyi Khye'u (see S. G. Karmay 1988a, p. 203), is the master who transmitted the teachings of the Great Perfection of the Zhang Zhung Aural Transmission to Gyer spungs sNang bzher sLod po (eighth century). For the former see the *rDzogs pa chen po zhang zhung snyan rgyud kyi brgyud pa'i bla ma rnam thar*, op. cit., pp. 26,5- 27,4, and relevant references in S. G. Karmay 1972. Tulku Thondup 1995, p. 82, contains an interesting statement in this respect: "Guru Rinpoche...even visited Zhangzhung, manifesting as the Tavihr̥ica [sic] ('Od kyi Khye'u), and taught *Dzogchen Nyen-gyu*, now known as one of the main teachings of Dzogpa Chenpo in the Bön religion..."

138. For the Three Bodies see The Twelve Little Tantras, section Na, pp. 129, 131. See also pp. 81-85, 85 n. 1. On the theory of the Three Bodies cf. e.g. G. M. Nagao 1991c.

134. It is interesting to see how the same idea is expressed in the context of European medieval mysticism (see W. Johnston 1973, p. 92): "... Techniques and methods are ultimately useless for awakening contemplative love. It is futile to come to this work armed with them. For all good methods and means depend on it, while it alone depends on nothing."

139. Cf. The Twelve Little Tantras, p. 81.

140. See The View which is like the Lion's Roar, section Kha, p. 177. Cf. H. V. Guenther 1963; L. Hurvitz 1992-1993.

141. Cf. p. 51 et seq.

142. Cf. The Twelve Little Tantras, p. 143.

143. For the term *dnagos po'i gnas lugs* cf. M. M. Broido 1980, pp. 59-66. Cf. D. Germano 1992, p. 15, where *gnas lugs* = abiding reality.

146. For this term see below, p. 55. Quoted from the *g.Yung drung xsang ba dbang xi rgyud*, the first of the Six Tantras (*rGyud drug*) inaugurating the Middle Proclamation in the Land of Human Beings (*bar mi yul du bsgrags pa'i skor*), *rDzogs chen bsGrags pa skor gsum*, p. 422,5 (BKSR, vol. 109, chapter 9, p. 43,5). Text listed in P. Kværne 1974 (K 111, B: 5.i., p. 112), and in S. G. Karmay 1977 (no. 26.i., p. 101).

147. Cf. The View which is like the Lion's Roar, section Pha, p. 231.

148. For which see below, p. 52. In the words of dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma, the Basis has the capacity of manifesting itself as all phenomena. This capacity is called *rtsal*. All that actually appears is called *rol pa*. Cf. T. Namdak 1992, p. 66, where the term *rtsal* is also said to denote the projections conjectured by the ordinary mind (*sems*).

144. *Man ngag 'khor ba dong sprugs*, in *rDzogs chen bsGrags pa skor gsum*, p. 673,6 (BKSR, vol. 109, p. 451,4). Listed in P. Kværne 1974 (K 111, B:10, p. 112), and in S. G. Karmay 1977 (no. 54, 45).

145. In our opinion, the expression *khyad par chen po* also entails the idea of the extraordinariness of the Great Perfection doctrine, which through its View allows direct understanding of the Ultimate Nature of Reality. Cf. The View which is like the Lion's Roar, pp. 197, 249.

149. The correct form is *byad*, not *byed*.

150. The Body of Reality (*bon sku*) where Primordial Wisdom (*ye shes*) arises in its five essential connotations. Cf. The Twelve Little Tantras, section Na, p. 129.

151. Cf. The Twelve Little Tantras, section Na, p. 131.

152. The Wisdom Holders, said to abide at the level of the Body of Perfection (*rdzogs sku*). Cf. The Twelve Little Tantras, section Na, p. 131.

153. The eighty components of meditative absorption are listed (as eighty-two) in the *Srid pa'i mdzod phug* (for which see n. 157 below), BKSr, vol. 176, pp. 594,6-602,4, and (as eighty-five) in the *gZi brjid*, BKSr, vol. 4 pp. 102,3-110; they are described in their specific characteristics in the *Shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa khams brgyad stong phrag brgya pa*, (BKSr, vol. 57 (A), chap. 49, pp. 178,7-198,3), a *gter ma* revealed by gShen chen Klu dga' (listed in P. Kværne 1974 as K 47, *Khams-brgyad gtan-la phab-pa'i 'bum*, pp. 102-103, and in S. G. Karmay 1977, no. 9, ii. 3., p. 8; published in 16 vols. by the TBMC, Dolanji, 1975; BKSr, vols. 42-57).

154. Light being the purest aspect of 'manifestation' at the worldly level.

155. The sphere of desire (*'dod kham*s), the sphere of form (*gzugs kham*s) and the sphere without form (*gzugs med kham*s). Cf. The Twelve Little Tantras, p. 81, n. 5.

156. The six realms of transmigration.

157. The five paths stemming from the five poisons (*dug lnga*): desire (*'dod chags*), aversion (*zhe sdang*), stupidity (*gti mug*), pride (*nga rgyal*), and jealousy (*phrag dog*). Cf. the *bDen pa bon gyi mdzod sgo sgra 'grel 'phrul gyi lde mig*, short title *mDzod sgra 'grel*, p. 225 et seq. (see *mDzod phug: Basic Verses and Commentary*, the Yung Drung Bon Students' Committee, Benares, 1993). The *mDzod sgra 'grel* is a commentary to the *Srid pa'i mdzod phug* attributed to the eighth-century master Dran pa Nam mkha'. According to the Bon religion, the *mDzod phug* was originally translated from the Zhang Zhung language into Tibetan at the time of King Gri gum, and was concealed in the residence of the Zhang Zhung king at Dang ra khyung rdzong during the persecution of Bon carried out by King Gri gum. The discovery of this text is probably to be ascribed to rMa ston Jo lcam, alias rMa lCam me (twelfth century); see S. G. Karmay 1972, p. 8, n. 4; S. G. Karmay 1977, p. 1.

158. Womb (*mingal*), egg (*sgo nga*), heat and humidity (*drod gsher*) and supernatural (*rdzus*). Cf. H. A. Jaschke 1993, p. 29.

159. We were unable to trace any textual reference on the forty-one kinds of fully developed manifestation.

160. *'byung gzhi*. Cf. H. A. Jaschke 1993, p. 398.

161. *lung ma bstan*; see BGTC, vol. 2, p. 2789. Cf. L. Chandra 1990, p. 1322, where *lung ma bstan* = *avyākṛita* (for which see M. Monier-Williams 1986, p. 112). According to T. Namdak 1992, p. 80, the expression *lung ma bstan* also refers to a very deep but at the same time dull and blank mental state that could be experienced during meditation practice, which is not characterized by clarity and awareness, as is the state of contemplation (*dgonxs pa*). Cf. The Twelve Little Tantras, section Ca, p. 115.

162. I.e., not hindered by conceptuality and unlimited in scope. Cf. The Twelve Little Tantras, section Ka, p. 95, n. 1. On the connection between mind (*sems*) and clear light (*'od gsal*) cf. G. Tucci 1980, pp. 63-67. See also below, p. 65.

163. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: when it is not understood that that is the Way of Being of the Great Perfection (*rdzogs pa chen po'i gnas lugs*).

164. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: when the Nature of the Mind is not understood as being Primordial Enlightenment, that lack of understanding results in the straying and illusory state of transmigration.

165. For the rope-snake simile cf. G. M. Nagao 1991d, p. 67; A. Sharma 1997. See also The View which is like the Lion's Roar, section Tha, p. 219.

166. *dbyings*. See below, p. 59 et seq.

168. See e.g. S. G. Karmay 1988a, *passim*.

169. Cf. P. Williams 1989, pp. 197-204. The relative *bodhicitta* consists in the intention of reaching Enlightenment in order to save all sentient beings from suffering.

170. *rDzogs pa chen po Yang rtse klong chen*, op. cit., pp. 167-257. The text in question is listed in P. Kværne 1974, T 256, p. 139, and in S. G. Karmay 1977, no. 55, vol. II, 4, p. 104.

167. We shall note here that when the term Mind-itself (*sems nyid*) is referred to enlightened beings, *sems* is replaced by the honorific *thugs* (*thugs nyid*), and would seem to be better rendered by 'the very heart', or 'the heart itself'; see The Twelve Little Tantras, section Ga, p. 103 and p. 145.

171. Cf. T. Namdak 1992, p. 47.

172. Cf. The Twelve Little Tantras, section Nya, p. 125.

173. See the *rDzogs pa chen po yang rtse klong chen gyi nges don*, op. cit., pp. 175,1-182,1. Cf. The Twelve Little Tantras, section Ka, p. 95, and The View which is like the Lion's Roar, section Ma, p. 237.

174. Cf. The Twelve Little Tantras, section Nya, p. 123, and The View which is like the Lion's Roar, section Ka, p. 175.

175. For the term *dbyings* cf. G. Tucci 1958, p. 136; D. Snellgrove 1967, Glossary, p. 304; D. S. Ruegg 1971, p. 464, n. 71; P. Kværne 1973, p. 31; D. Germano 1992, pp. 109-113 and p. 882. A descriptive analysis of *dbyings* is found in the *mDzod sgra 'grel*, op. cit., pp. 80-91.

176. Cf. the Twelve Little Tantras, p. 83. See also *Sems dang ye shes kyi dri lan* in *Miscellaneous Writings* (*gSung thor bu*) of Kun mkhyen Klong chen pa Dri med 'Od zer (1308-1363), Sanje Dorje, New Delhi, 1973, vol. 1, pp. 377,2-393.

177. Cf. The Twelve Little Tantras, section Na, p. 129.

178. For *spros pa* as equivalent of Skr. *prapañca* see M. Monier-Williams 1986, p. 681, F. Edgerton 1953, vol. II, Dictionary, p. 380 and also D. T. Suzuki 1934, p. 119. Cf. R. A. Stein 1983, p. 155, n. 15. D. Germano 1992, p. 864, translates *spros pa* with 'discursiveness'. According to dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma, *spros pa* = 'gul ba, g.yo ba, to move, act, change, alter (cf. BGTC, vol. 1, p. 496), and when followed by *bral* (*spros bral*) = *mtshan ma* (Skr. *nimitta*, see M. Monier-Williams 1986, p. 551, F. Edgerton 1953, p. 297) *med pa*, without characterization, or also *nyon mongs med pa*, devoid of afflictions.

179. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: the realization that the Dimension and the Self-Originated Primordial Wisdom exist inseparably. Cf. The View which is like the Lion's Roar, section Ba, p. 233.

180. *thig le nyag gcig*. This is a very frequent expression occurring in the texts of the Great Perfection (see The Twelve Little Tantras, *passim*). It is used in a poetical and laudatory way to denote the state of non-duality that characterizes the Basis or the Mind-itself. "The Explanation of the Twelve Little Tantras" (op. cit., p. 187, 1-2) interprets the expression *thig le nyag gcig* in the following way: "Thig is the Primordial Wisdom of Emptiness; *le* is the Dimension of Clarity; *nyag gcig* is (their) unification.

Thig is absence of birth; *le* is absence of interruption; *nyag gcig* is absence of birth and interruption. It is the non-dual Body of Reality, pure from the beginning." (*thig ni stong pa'i ye shes so / le ni gsal ba'i dbyings nyid do / nyag gcig gzung du 'jug pa'o / thig ni skye ba med pa'o / le ni 'gag pa med pa'o / nyag gcig skye 'gag gnyis med do / gnyis med bon sku ka dag go* //) *Thig le*, which means sphere, dot, and when used in modern Tibetan, zero, also represents the potentiality of the non-dual state, and as the form of the sphere suggests, it denotes infiniteness, lack of borders, perfection from within. It also has a strictly technical connotation inasmuch as it refers to spheres appearing as visions when certain practices are performed. See below, pp. 68-69. Cf. p. 217, n. 2.

181. Cf. The Twelve Little Tantras, section Kha, pp. 99, 101.

182. For a discussion of *dpe'i 'od gsal* and related notions in the Buddhist context see D. S. Ruegg 1966 n. 2, pp. 58-64. Cf. Tucci 1958, p. 60-64.

183. Cf. the View which is like the Lion's Roar, section Da, p. 223.

184. See R. A. Stein 1970; P. Kvarne 1985; Sogyal Rinpoche 1994, p. 263 et seq.; G. Orofino 1990, *passim*. It is interesting to note the different ways in which the teachings of the intermediate state are classified in the *dkar chag* of Rig 'dzin Kun grol

Grags pa, Nyi ma bsTan 'dzin and g.Yung drung Tshul Khrims dBang grags: the first includes them in the Section of Formulas (*sNgags sde*, vol. Du, op. cit., p. 204, *Dam pa rang grol gyi zhi khro bar do thos grol*). The second considers them as *bKa' brten* or teachings that support the Word (cf. P. Kværne 1974, T 124, p. 123, *Bar do thos grol*). Also g.Yung drung Tshul Khrims includes them in the Section of Formulas; however, many titles referred to as *bar do* teachings appear in various volumes of the Mind Section (*Sems sde*) as well (op. cit., pp. 1158-1281). Such an occurrence seems justified, if nothing else, by the fact that during the *bar do* one is supposed to have the opportunity of concretely realizing the state of the Great Perfection.

185. Cf. The View which is like the Lion's Roar, section Pa, p. 229.

186. We have used a microfilmed reproduction of the text published by the TBMC, Dolanji, 1967, pp. 19-192, preserved at the Library of the Toyo Bunko, Tokyo. We hereby wish to express our gratitude to Mr. Y. Fukuda, Research Member of the Tibetan Seminar at the Toyo Bunko, for having kindly assisted us in obtaining this reproduction.

187. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: the mirage of existence experienced by the ordinary mind.

188. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma it cannot be defined since it does not possess any inherent or concrete nature.

190. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: the dependency of the mind with respect to the objects of its delusion.

191. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: in the Condition of *Kun tu bZang po* everything is equalized inasmuch as it is perceived as being empty in nature.

192. *zo chu'i rgyun ma*. L. Chandra 1990, p. 2072 has *zo ba'i 'khrul 'khor* = *ghaṭi-yantra*. M. Monier-Williams 1986, p. 375 explains *ghaṭi-yantra* as "the buckets of the well or any machine for raising water", and compares it to *ara-ghaṭṭa*, which is described (p. 86) as "a wheel or machine for raising water from a well". Prof. Jan Nattier of Indiana University has kindly pointed out to me another interesting reference in F. Edgerton 1953, vol. 2, p. 162 in connection with the term *aupapādukāḥ* (Divy. 300.17: *aupapādukāḥ sattvā ghaṭiyantraprayogena cyavamanā upapadyamānaśca*), "falling and being reborn in the manner of a bucket-machine".

193. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: the imprint of grasping and grasped.

194. About the notion of *bdaḡ* and *gzhan* cf. e.g. T. J. F. Tillemans 1988.

189. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: when the ordinary mind is caught by its delusions.

195. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: the eight views of the lower Vehicles.

196. Cf. P. Kværne 1975, G. Tucci 1980, p. 65.

197. *g.Yung drung yang rtse gsang ba'i rgyud*, BKRS, vol. 106, p. 226,4-6. Text listed in S. G. Karmay 1977 as no. 13, 6., p. 13. Reproduced in *Collected Tantras of Bon* by T. Namdak, TBMC, New Delhi, 1972, 3 vols., vol. 3, pp. 90-99.

200. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: when they are not understood as being the innate potential of the Mind-itself.

201. *rGyud bu chung bcu gnyis kyi don bstan pa*, op. cit., p. 186,1-2.

202. See the *rDzogs pa chen po zhang zhung snyan rgyud kyi spyi don gsal ba'i sgron ma* by Tshe dbang Rig 'dzin (cf. p. 29, n. 55), p. 365,2-4. This text is not included in SPS vol. 73, New Delhi, 1968 (cf. P. Kværne 1974, pp. 109-111), while it is reproduced in the BKSr (vol. 110, pp. 328-380).

203. This is how they are referred to in the '*Khor lo bzhi sbrags*, p. 451,1. See discussion below.

198. Cf. BGTC, vol. 1, p. 17, *kun tu brtags pa'i mtshan nyid*.

199. Cf. The View which is like the Lion's Roar, section Ca, p. 203.

204. Op. cit., section Zha, pp. 449-464. Listed in P. Kværne 1974 as K 108, 8=Zha, p. 110, and in S. G. Karmay 1977 as no. 50, Zha, p. 96.

205. We shall note that the origin of the phenomenal world is also presented from an esoteric perspective recalling Great Perfection tenets in the *gSang mchog ma rgyud thugs rje nyi ma'i rgyud*, a *gter ma* revealed by Guru rNon rtse, alias A Ya Bon po lHa 'bum (b. 1136); see the *gZhi ye sangs rgyas pa'i rgyud*, the *Lam mngon sangs rgyas pa'i rgyud* and the '*Bras bu rdzogs sangs rgyas pa'i rgyud*—listed in P. Kværne 1974 as K 81, p. 107 and in S. G. Karmay 1977 as no. 21,ii, Ka, Kha and Ga, p. 19; published within the collection entitled *Ma rgyud sangs rgyas rgyud gsum rtsa 'grel*, TBMC, New Delhi, 1971. A study of the Mother *Tantras* in the Bon religion has been carried out by D. Martin (1994). Cf. S. Dietz 1988.

208. Op. cit., *bar do 'dus kyi 'khor lo* (the Wheel of the time of the intermediate state), p. 463,3-4. The knowledge of sound, light and rays originating from oneself, and that of the Way of Being mentioned in this passage represent two of the six precognitions (*mn̄gon shes drug*) said to arise together with the six subsequent recollections (*rjes dran drug*) during the intermediate state. Through these precognitions and recollections one is supposed to reach deliverance; see op. cit., *bar do 'dus kyi 'khor lo*, p. 463, 2-5.

209. Cf. S. G. Karmay 1988a, pp. 203-205, and S. G. Karmay 1998.

210. *'Khor lo bzhi sbrags*, op. cit., p. 464,3.

206. These are not all the instances where this expression appears in the text; we are quoting the following ones as illustrative examples.

207. Op. cit., *gnas pa gzhi'i 'khor lo* (the Wheel of the abiding Basis), p. 451,3.

211. Cf. S. G. Karmay 1988b, *passim*.

212. These two practices are undertaken after a preliminary training meant to achieve distinct perception between the way of functioning of the ordinary mind and the Mind-itself. Cf. T. Namdak 1992, pp. 69-84. A thorough mastery in the practice of *khregs chod* is required before one may approach and benefit from the practice of *thod rgal*; the former is traditionally recognized as being so determinant to the latter that it is said: *khregs ma chod na thod mi rgal*, "without cutting the rigidity there can be no transcendence". Cf. T. Namdak 1993, pp. 51-113, T. Wangyal 1993, pp. 164-174. See also J.-L. Achard 1992. For the terms *khregs chod* and *thod rgal* cf. D. S. Ruegg 1966, p. 76; J. May 1967; D. Snellgrove 1967, p. 139; R. A. Stein 1971, pp. 23-28; G. Tucci 1980, pp. 85-87, and p. 264, n. 31; S. G. Karmay 1972, p. 53, n. 1; P. Kværne 1973, p. 44, n. 9; E. Dargyay 1977, p. 217, n. 115 and p. 230, n. 374; S. G. Karmay 1988a, pp. 193, 213-214 and 215.

213. Cf. the *'Khor lo bzhi sbrags*, op. cit., p. 462,4.

214. Cf. S. G. Karmay 1972, p. 53, n. 1; S. G. Karmay 1975b, p. 155; G. Tucci 1980, p. 86; N. Namkhai 1985, p. 1021-1022; S. G. Karmay 1988a, p. 190-196.

215. According to dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma, hair and nails do not disappear because they are insensitive parts of the body (*tshor ba med pa*). Sogyal Rinpoche 1994, p. 168 says that: "... Only the hair and nails, the impurities of the body, are found." According to Western physiology, hair and nail are not considered to be living tissues because they do not contain any DNA. One of the most recent, publicly known examples of rainbow body in the Bonpo tradition is that of the famous master and prolific scholar Shar rdza bKra shis rGyal mtshan (1859-1934). For a translated account of this event see T. Namdak 1993, pp. 26-29. Cf. S. G. Karmay 1972, p. xv-xvi and also BGTC, vol. 2, p. 3290. See also the *'Khor lo bzhi sbrags*, op. cit., pp. 462,4-464,3, and the *Bar do'i ngo sprod kyi gdams pa* in the *rDzogs pa chen po Yang rtse klong chen*, op. cit., pp. 667-725.

1. The text is indexed in P. Kværne 1974 as K 108,4 = Ca, p. 110, and in S. G. Karmay 1977 as no. 50, Ca., p. 94.

2. According to dGe bshes rNam rgyal Nyi ma Brag dkar, who worked as a librarian at the TBMC from 1989 to 1995, the reproduction of this text in a single volume, as well as that of the *g.Yung drung bon gyi bka' dang bka' rten* (2 vols., see Note to the Critical Edition of the *lTa ba seng ge sgra bsgrags*, p. 165), was printed in India during the 1980s, through the support and sponsorship of the late Khyung po rTse drug mKhan po brTson 'grus rGyal mtshan, alias rTse drug Rinpoche (1914-1985).

1. *mDzod sde* section, vol. 1/Ka and vol. 110 respectively. Both versions are identical, contextually and in terms of page and folio numbering. I am grateful to S. Meinheit of the Library of Congress for having provided me with a photostatic copy of the text of the first reprint, and to the library of the Shang Shung Institute, Italy, for that of the second.

2. Two folios are equally numbered as 6. In this critical edition the second folio no. 6 will be called 6 bis a/b.

3. I am grateful to P. Kværne for having put the relevant microfilm at my disposal.

1. The *legenda* and the technical details related to the critical apparatus apply, with due differences in the abbreviations of texts names and page/folio numbers, to both the Twelve Little Tantras and the View which is like the Lion's Roar.

1. For which cf. A. Csöma de Körös 1834; J. Bacot 1912; Nor brang O rgyan, "*Bod kyi skung yig gi rnam gzhas chung ngu*", *Bod rig pa'i ched rtsom gces bsdu*s, Bod ljongs Mi dmangs dPe skrun khang, Xining, 1987, pp. 413-483; R. Prats 1991; see also Namkha Gyal tsen (Cha-Phur), *Yig gzugs du ma'i ma phyi gzhon nu mdzas pa'i lang tsho*, Mu khri bTsan po'i Rig gzhung zhib 'jug khang, Bonpo Monastic Centre, Dolanji, 1994.

1. KS: rdzogs pa chen po zhang zhung snyan rgyud kyi lta ba spyi gcod kyi rtsa ba'i klad don rgyud bu chung bcu gnyis yod.

4. smrar ZN, SP : smar KS, TK. See relevant note in the translation (p. 79, n. 2).

5. i ZN, SP : i KS, TK

2. TK: g.yung drung tshig rkang bcu gnyis bzhugs s.ho.

3. KS and TK have a sort of *yi mgo* at this point.

1. KS: The Twelve Little Tantras, primary introduction to the general doctrine of the Zhang Zhung Aural Transmission of the Great Perfection. TK: The Twelve Everlasting Verses.

2. *smrar* or *smar* is one of the four main idioms of the Zhang Zhung language (Phug pa, Bar pa, sGo pa, i.e. Zhang Zhung sMar, and Phal pa). See the *sGra yi don sdeb snang gsal sgron me* by Zhu ston Nyi ma Grags pa (1616-1670), *Tibetan Zang Zung Dictionary*, Bonpo Association, Lahore Press, Jama Masjid, New Delhi, 1965, p. 6; cf. E. Haarh 1968, p. 9; see also the *Zhang bod kyi skad gnyis shan sbyar sgra yi rtogs brjod* (n.d.), compiled by sLob dPon Kun bzang Blo gros (present century) of g.Yung drung gling monastery, a work based on the *mDzod sgra 'grel* (op. cit.) and other sources, p. 122b2 et seq.; cf. R. A. Stein 1971, pp. 231-234. For other works on the Zhang Zhung language, see Bibliography under Chang, Hoffmann, Laufer, Orofino and Thomas. The term *smrar* (*smar*) is also considered the Zhang Zhung equivalent for the Tibetan *yang po*, *bzang po*, *legs po*, 'good', or 'well', and *phan thog po*, 'beneficial'.

3. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: *i thi* = *gsang ba*; *ku yig* = *bka'*; *khri rtse* = 'bras bu; *u pa* = *man ngag*; *tan tra* = *rgyud*; *thad do ci* = *ces bya ba*, that is to say, the *Tantra* describing the secret instructions on the Fruit, quintessence of the Word (*don la bka' yi snying po* 'bras bu man ngag ston pa'i rgyud ces bya ba bzhugs so). The *Dictionary* of Nyi ma Grags pa, op. cit., has *i thi ya* = *gsang bar bya* (p. 20 last line); *khri rtse* = 'bras bu (p. 9 line 6); *u pa* = *bka'* (p. 20, line 7); cf. S. Hummel 1974-1975, p. 503, where *u pa* = *man ngag*. For explanations on the particle *ci* and relevant references in Nyi ma Grags pa, see E. Haarh, op. cit., p. 23, "Vocabulary" p. 30; and for the closing particle *do*, ibidem, p. 21 and p. 35.

4. We understand *gnad byang* as *gnad ka*; see BGTC, vol. 2, p. 1536. On the meaning of *byang*, see J. Gyatso, "The Relic Text as Prophecy: The Semantic Drift of *Byang-bu* and its Appropriation in the Treasure Tradition", *TJ*, Rai Bahadur T. D. Densapa Commemorative Issue, n.d.

5. *E ma ho*, like *e ma* is an expression conveying wonder, joy, astonishment and surprise; cf. H. A. Jaschke 1993, p. 607.

1. tu ZN, SP : du KS, TK

2. 1/ ZN, SP, TK : om. KS

3. bstan ZN, SP : ston KS : stan TK

4. cig ZN, SP, TK : gcig KS

5. 2/ ZN, SP, TK : om. KS

6. tu ZN, SP : du KS, TK

7. du incl. ZN, SP, KS : om. TK

8. so ZN, SP, KS : swo TK

9. de'i ngang las incl. ZN, SP, TK : om. KS

10. tu ZN, SP : du KS, TK

11. rje ZN, SP, TK : rjes KS

12. snyoms ZN, SP : khyab KS

13. so ZN, SP : s.ho KS, TK

1. This is the deity gShen lha 'Od dkar, appearing and teaching at the level of the Body of Perfection (*rDzogs sku*). For a description, see e.g. the *sDong po dgu 'dus lta ba'i rgyud chen*, a text related to the cycle of the *Byang sems gab pa dgu skor*; BKSr, vol. 99, p. 98a5-98b2 (text listed in P. Kvaerne 1974 as K 109, 3., p. 111).

2. Three out of the four versions examined (ZN, SP, TK) maintain the numbering '1.' for this passage (cf. critical edition, p. 80, line 2), '2.' for the following one (p. 80, line 4), '3.' for the one introducing the request for instructions by gShen Tshad med 'Od ldan (p. 84, line 6), and then '2.' again for the passage where gShen lha 'Od dkar answers the petition of gShen Tshad med 'Od ldan (p. 86, line 7). It seems logical to consider paragraph '1.' as connected with the fourth of the above-mentioned paragraphs numbered '2.', while the first 'no. 2.' and 'no. 3.' would rather appear as supplementary, inasmuch as they provide details about the underlying spatio-temporal circumstances leading to the exposition of these precepts.

3. That is to say gShen lha 'Od dkar.

4. See critical edition, p. 80, line 2. This is an unusual opening when compared with those contained in Buddhist texts. Cf. J. Brough 1950; see also J. Silk 1989. For another example of unusual opening cf. the *sDong po dgu 'dus lta ba'i rgyud chen*, op. cit., p. 98a3: "'di skad ston pas gsung pa'i dus cig na..." (at one time when the Teacher spoke these words).

5. gShen lha 'Od dkar is said to reside at the level of the Body of Perfection in the divine 'Og min palace ('og min lha'i pho brang du rdzogs sku gshen lha 'od dkar; cf. 'Dus pa rin po che'i rgyud zer mig, Bonpo Foundation, New Delhi, 1965, (po ti), p. 505,2). Bon po cosmology parallels the Buddhist one as to the classification of existence into three spheres: the sphere of desire ('dod kham, Skr. *kāmadhātu*), the sphere of form (gzugs kham, Skr. *rūpadhātu*) and that without form (gzugs med kham, Skr. *arūpadhātu*). The heaven 'Og min (Skr. *Akaṇiṣṭha*), located in the sphere of form, is considered as a plane where one is reborn in order to purify the most subtle obscurations of consciousness (cf. T. Namdak 1992, p. 10-11). For a description of the three spheres according to the Bon po tradition, see the *Srid pa las kyi gting zlog gi rtsa rgyud kun gsal nyi zer sgron ma*, a text attributed to Dran pa Nam mkha' (eighth century) and revealed by Bra bo sGom nyag (thirteenth century; cf. S. G. Karmay 1972, p. 16, n. 3, p. 191), g.Yung drung rGyal mtshan, New Delhi, (about 1965), fol. 35,3 et seq. Cf. Y. Ishihama and Y. Fukuda 1989, pp. 156-161; M. Ishikawa 1990, p. 121; F. Edgerton 1953, vol. 2, Dictionary, p. 270; T. Rikey and A. Ruskin 1992, p. 116 et seq.

1. las ZN, SP, TK : nas KS

6. to ZN, SP, TK : ro KS

7. up to this point, rkyang shad ZN, SP, TK : nyis shad KS

8. tsheg ZN : ... SP : rkyang shad KS, TK

2. ye shes incl. ZN, SP, KS : >ye shes< TK

3. rje ZN, SP, KS : brje TK

4. khyab par incl. TK : om. ZN, SP, KS

5. gyur ZN, SP : 'gyur KS, TK

15. bskul ZN, SP, KS : skul TK

1. rje'i ZN, SP, TK : rjes'i KS

2. 'gags ZN, SP, TK : 'gag KS

3. kyang ZN, SP : dang KS, TK

4. TK has >Kha< (dbu chen) written above gshen.

5. TK has spyir (sic) yang sprul pa'i ston pa here, with >Ka< (dbu chen) written above yang. See below, n. 13.

6. rkyang shad ZN, SP, KS : nyis shad TK

7. ci ZN, SP, KS : ji TK

8. cig ZN, SP : gcig KS, TK

9. tu ZN, SP : du KS, TK

10. so ZN, SP, KS : swo TK

11. rkyang shad ZN, SP : nyis shad KS, TK

12. 3/ ZN, SP, TK : om. KS

13. (*cir yang sprul pa'i ston pa*) ZN, SP : om. KS : (*spyir yang sprul pa'i ston pa*) TK

14. kyi ZN, SP, KS : gyi TK

1. The passage starting from "The Primordial teacher Kun tu bZang po" up to this point can be seen as an illustration of the way in which the Three Bodies (*Bon*, *rDzogs* and *sPrul sku*) are conceived and displayed in terms of their emptiness (*stong pa nyid*), dynamic potential (*rtsal*) and inseparability (*dbyer ba med pa*).

2. I.e., to gShen lha 'Od dkar.

1. rje'i ZN, SP, TK : rjes KS

2. bsgribs ZN, SP : sgrib KS, TK

3. bstan ZN, SP, TK : bsten KS

4. tu ZN, SP : du KS, TK

5. ces ZN, SP, KS : ces, with zhabs kyu written under ca, TK

6. 2/ ZN, SP, TK : om. KS

7. rtsal ZN, SP, KS, TK : stsal ego

8. rkyang shad ZN, SP, TK : nyis shad KS

9. tu ZN, SP : du KS, TK

11. rdul ZN, SP, KS : bdul TK

12. gsung ZN, SP, KS : gsungs TK

13. de ZN, SP, KS : ste TK

14. pa'i ZN, SP, KS : >pa'i< (dbu chen) TK

15. so ZN, SP, TK : s.ho KS

16. rkyang shad ZN, SP : nyis shad KS, TK

10. tu ZN, SP : du KS, TK

1. ka ZN, SP, KS : bka' TK

2. kyang ZN, SP, KS : dang TK

3. min ZN, SP : med KS : men TK

4. rkyang shad ZN, SP, KS : one single sentence together with ces (sic) gsung pas TK

5. zhes ZN, SP : ces KS, TK

6. gsung ZN, SP, KS : gsungs TK

7. las ZN, SP : la KS, TK

8. gi ZN, SP, TK : gis KS

9. rkyang shad ZN, SP, TK : nyis shad KS

10. gsungs ZN, SP, TK : gsung KS

1. Kha ZN, SP, TK : om. KS

2. gyi ZN, SP, TK : gyis KS

3. bstan ZN, SP, TK : bstan pa KS
4. bgrod ZN, SP, KS : sgrod TK
5. rdzogs ZN, SP, TK : grub KS
6. ste ZN, SP, TK : te KS
7. tsheg incl. ZN, SP : om. KS, TK
8. med incl. ZN, SP, KS : >med< (dbu chen) TK
9. spyod ZN, SP : spyad KS, TK

1. Although in the texts this note appears after the first Little Tantra (see the critical edition, line 2), we have preferred to translate it before, in order to present the Twelve Little Tantras without interruption.

1. skye ZN, SP, KS : kye TK
2. ba ZN, SP, TK : 'gag KS
3. na ZN, SP, KS : nas TK

4. pa incl. ZN, SP, TK : >pa< (dbu chen) TK

5. med incl. ZN, SP, KS : >med< (dbu chen) TK

6. gleng ZN, SP, KS : kleng TK

7. gzhi'i ZN, SP, KS : bzhi'i TK

8. le'u 'o ZN, SP, KS : le u'o TK

9. rkyang shad ZN, SP : nyis shad KS, TK

1. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: *don* = *ngo bo*, essence.

2. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: birth and interruption are synonyms of appearance (*snang ba*) and emptiness (*stong pa nyid*). Cf. The View which is like the Lion's Roar, *passim*, where the same principles are expressed in terms of Condition (*ngang*), Nature (*rang bzhin*) and Identity (*bdag nyid*).

3. Cf. BGTC, vol. 1, p. 427, *gleng gzhi*, (1) and (2).

1. rkyang shad ZN, SP : nyis shad KS, TK

3. bstan ZN, SP, TK : bshad KS

4. te ZN, SP, KS : ste TK

5. bshad ZN, SP, TK : bsten KS

6. This sentence is not written as a note in TK.

7. ka ZN, SP, KS : bka' TK

8. nas ZN, SP, KS : na>s< TK

9. du inc. ZN, SP, KS : >du< (dbu chen) TK

10. dag ZN, SP, KS : yad TK

11. mar ZN, SP, KS : ma >r< (dbu chen) TK

2. Ka ante notam ZN, SP, TK : Ka post notam KS

1. This 'light' should not be considered as light in mere physical terms, since it represents the dynamic potential (*rtsal*) of the Mind-itself to appear in different ways; this 'active' aspect of the Mind-itself, i.e. the Basis, is also symbolized by the Primordial Wisdom of Self-Awareness, which perceives itself as inseparable from the Absolute Reality. Cf. The View which is like the Lion's Roar, section Da p. 223. "The Explanation of the Twelve Little Tantras" (*rGyud bu chung bcu gnyis kyi don bstan pa*, op. cit.) states that light as such represents the dynamic potential of Primordial Wisdom (see Introduction, p. 65). Cf. Tucci 1980, pp. 63-67.

2. I.e. when existence is considered as having an inherent nature.

1. pa yis ZN, SP, KS : pa'i TK

2. rgyu ZN, SP, KS : rgyud TK

3. For the use of the topicalizer *ni* with particular reference to archaic literature see S. V. Beyer 1992, pp. 275-278.

4. lnga incl. ZN, SP, KS : >lnga< (dbu chen) TK

5. pha ZN, SP, KS : phyi TK

6. bya ba'i ZN, SP, TK : bya'i KS

7. rnam ZN, SP, KS : rnams TK

8. rkyang shad ZN, SP : nyis shad KS, TK

1. See Introduction, p. 53, n. 157.

2. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: the six spheres of transmigration.

3. The Three Bodies of Reality (*Bon sku*), Perfection (*rDzogs sku*), and Emanation (*sPrul sku*).

4. That is to say, the side of the View of the Great Perfection, where both the five poisons (desire, aversion, stupidity, pride and jealousy) and Enlightenment are neither rejected nor accepted, in virtue of their lacking inherent nature. Since the real nature of the five poisons or passions is that of the Five Wisdoms (the latter notion being common to both Buddhist and Bon po *tantric* teachings), they cannot be considered as impure, and therefore they are not to be rejected. In the *tantric* systems the transformation and sublimation of the five poisons is used as a path of realization, which is the reason why the vehicle of *Tantra* is known as the path of transformation (*bsgyur lam*). In contemplative practices of the Great Perfection, the arising of passions, feelings, emotions and so on is observed and left just as it is, there is no question of rejection or transformation; this is also a reason why the path of the Great Perfection is called that of self-liberation (*rang grol*).

5. See section Na, p. 129.

1. ngos ZN : nges SP, KS, TK

2. bstan ZN, SP, TK : bsten KS

3. chub ZN, SP, KS : byub TK

4. slad ZN, SP, TK : bslad KS

5. gdags ZN, SP, KS : gdang TK

6. The whole verse is an addenda in TK.

7. gsung ZN, SP, KS : gsang TK

8. mtshan ma ZN, SP, KS : dmigs su TK

9. tsheg ZN, SP, TK : om. KS

1. zad ZN, SP, TK : bzad KS

2. mi zad (bzad) pa ZN, SP, KS : zad med gter TK

3. phrin ZN, SP, KS : 'phrin TK

4. gyis ZN, SP, TK : gyi KS

5. bas ZN, SP, TK : ba KS

6. pa ZN, SP, TK : pas KS

7. Cf. n. 8 to the critical edition of the *lTa ba seng ge sgra bsgrags*, p. 168.

8. gi ZN, SP, TK : gis KS

9. gyi ZN, SP, KS : kyi TK

10. gi ZN, SP, TK : gis KS

11. gyis ZN, SP, TK : gyi KS

12. gyi ZN, SP, TK : gyis KS

13. bgrod ZN, SP, KS : sgrod TK

14. bgrod ZN, SP, KS : sgrod TK

15. lam la om. ZN, SP, TK : incl. KS

16. la ZN, SP, TK : par KS

17. rkyang shad ZN, SP : nyis shad KS, TK

2. po ZN, SP, KS : po'i TK

3. pas ZN, SP, KS : pa>s< (dbu chen) TK

4. skye ZN, SP, KS : skyed TK

5. pa'i ZN, SP : pa KS, TK
6. min ZN, SP, KS : men TK
7. tu ZN, SP : du KS, TK
8. po ZN, SP : po yi KS, TK
9. yin ZN, SP, KS : kyis TK
10. byung ZN, SP, KS : byon TK
11. ltar ZN, SP, TK : ta KS
12. rtogs ZN, SP, TK : rtog KS
13. ste ZN, SP, KS : de TK
1. Ga ZN, KS, TK : Ka SP

1. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: the Self-Originated Primordial Wisdom of the Basis (gzhi'i rang 'byung ye shes).

2. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma *rtogs pa* stands for realization of the state of Reality; *snga* is the state preceding that realization, which is the condition of transmigratory beings; *phyi* refers to the state that comes after realization of Reality has occurred.

1. la ZN, SP, TK : las KS

2. las ZN, SP, KS : la TK

3. skyes ZN, SP, KS : skyed TK

4. pa'i ZN, SP : pa KS, TK

5. min ZN, SP, KS : me>n< (dbu chen) TK

6. rin po che ZN, SP, KS : rin chen ni TK

7 btsal ZN, SP : brtsal KS : rtsal TK

8. tsheg ZN, SP : om. KS, TK

9. kyis ZN, SP, TK : kyi KS

10. sems kyis sems la ZN, SP : sems kyi sems la KS : sems la sems kyis TK

11. btsal ZN, SP : brtsal KS : rtsal TK

12. te ZN, SP, KS : ste TK

13. btsal ZN, SP, KS : rtsal TK

14. bar ZN, SP : ba KS : par TK

1. shing ZN, SP, KS : cing TK

2. khong du ZN, SP, TK : khongs su KS

3. gyur ZN, SP, KS : 'gyur TK

4. brtan ZN, SP : brten KS : bstan TK

5. po'i ZN, SP, TK : po KS

6. pas ZN, SP : pa KS, TK

7. pa'i ZN, SP : ba KS : pa TK : ba'i ego

8. min ZN, SP, KS : men TK

9. gyis ZN, SP, TK : gyi KS

10. rkyang shad ZN, SP : nyis shad KS, TK

1. i.e. understanding it and taking it to heart.

1. nga, tsheg om. ZN, KS, TK : ga SP

2. ltaś ZN, SP, TK : bltaś KS

3. bar ZN, SP, KS : par TK

4. te ZN, SP, KS : ste TK

5. nyid ZN, SP, KS : ni TK

6. ba'i ZN, SP : pas KS : pa'i TK

7. mchog ZN, SP, TK : chog KS

1. tu ZN, SP : du KS, TK
2. gsung ZN, SP, KS : gsang TK
3. ci ZN, SP : cir KS, TK
4. cing ZN, SP, KS : zhing TK
5. min ZN, SP, KS : men TK
6. cir ZN, SP, KS : ci TK
7. ka ZN, SP : dka' KS : bka' TK
8. ris ZN, SP, TK : rig KS
9. sogs ZN, SP, TK : swogs KS
10. gi ZN, SP, TK : gis KS
11. mthas ZN, SP : mtha' KS, TK

1. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: it is not transmigration, it is not the state transcending suffering, it is not found as something that can be specified (*'khor ba ma yin, 'das pa ma yin, 'di zhes ci yang ma grub*).

2. The four limits according to the *rDzogs pa chen po yang rtse klong chen gyi nges don*, op. cit., pp. 193,5-194,3: "(It is) not ascertained as being; (it is) not refuted as non-being; (it is) not acknowledged as being the two; (it is) not discarded as not being the two. (The Pure-and-Perfect-Mind) is not ascertained as being: it is not ascertained as that which is because, really and truly, nothing, not even an atom, exists. However, since (it) unobstructedly arises in various ways, (it) is not refuted as non-being. (It) is not acknowledged as being the two, since that which is appearance is emptiness (and) that which is emptiness is appearance, and there is no distinction between these two. (It) is not discarded for not being the two, because on the other side of rejecting appearance there is no emptiness, and on the other side of rejecting emptiness there is no appearance." (*de la mu bzhi ni yin par mi sgrub / min par mi 'gegs / gnyis ka yin pa khas mi len / gnyis ka min par yal bar mi 'dor ba'o / de la yin par mi sgrub ste / yang dag par bden par grub pa rdul tsham men pos [sic] / yin par mi sgrub / sna tshogs su ma 'gags par 'char bas / min par mi 'gegs / gnyis ka yin par khas mi len te / snang ba gang yin stong pa / stong pa gang yin snang ba / de gnyis la tha dad med pa'i phyir / gnyis ka min par yal bar mi 'dor te / snang ba spang ba'i pha rol na stong pa med de / stong pa spangs pa'i [sic] pha rol na snang ba med pa'i phyir ro //*).

1. 'jin ZN, SP : 'dzin KS, TK

2. phyal ZN, SP, KS : chal TK

3. 'dzin pa ZN, SP, KS : cig pu TK

4. bzung ZN, SP, KS : bzu TK

5. ba ZN, SP, KS : pa TK

6. pa ZN, SP : ba KS, TK

7. bral ZN, SP, KS : dral TK

8. rkyang shad ZN, SP, TK : nyis shad KS

9. gcod ZN, SP, KS : bcod TK

10. thun ZN, SP, KS : mthun TK

11. mong ZN, SP : mongs KS, TK

12. min ZN, SP, KS : men TK

13. mtha' ZN, SP, KS : 'tha' TK

14. rkyang shad ZN, SP : nyis shad KS, TK

1. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: the view of eternalists.

2. *phyal*; cf. BGTC, vol. 2, p. 1738, *phyal dpyad*.

3. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: the view of the nihilists.

4. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: the view of ordinary beings.

5. Cf. The View which is like the Lion's Roar, p. 169.

1. sgom ZN, SP, TK : bsgom KS

2. ba ZN, SP : bar KS, TK

3. sgom ZN, SP, TK : bsgom KS

4. sgom ZN, SP : bsgom KS : sgoms TK

5. te ZN, SP, KS : ste TK

6. sgorn ZN, SP : bsgom KS : sgoms TK

7. 'grib ZN, SP, KS : grib TK

8. tu ZN, SP : du KS, TK

9. po ZN, SP : po'i KS, TK

10. ma bcos pa ZN, SP, KS : mi rtog, struck through and followed by ma bcos pa TK

11. ma ZN, SP, TK : ma'i KS

12. sgom ZN, SP, TK : bsgom KS

1. gyis ZN, SP, TK : gyi KS

2. btab ZN, SP, TK : gtab KS

3. ngang ZN, SP, TK : rang KS

4. sgom ZN, SP, TK : bsgom KS

5. sgom ZN, SP, TK : bsgom KS

6. sgom ZN, SP, TK : bsgom KS

7. gcig ZN, SP, TK : cig KS

8. rkyang shad ZN, SP : nyis shad KS, TK

1. Cf. The View which is like the Lion's Roar, section Ta, p. 217.

3. All versions examined contain the syllable 'ma' after sgom. Both dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma and dGe bshes rNam rgyal Nyi ma maintain that 'ma' is not a mistake for 'pa' (sgom pa), but a supplementary syllable (kha skong). On this cf. BGTC, vol. 1, p. 186, kha skong.

6. dgag ZN, SP, KS : bkag TK

9. ci ZN, SP, KS : ji TK

10. rkyang shad ZN, SP : nyis shad KS, TK

1. cha ZN, KS, TK : *** SP

2. ba ZN, SP : bar KS, TK

4. sprol ZN, SP : spros KS, TK

5. min ZN, SP, KS : men TK

7. sgrub ZN, SP, TK : bsgrub KS

8. ba ZN, SP, TK : pa KS

1. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: *rol pa'i spyod pa* = *spyod pa sna tshogs*.

1. dpe'i ZN, SP, TK : dpe ni KS

2. 'du ZN, SP : 'dus KS, TK

3. cing ZN, SP, KS, TK : zhing ego

4. shing ZN, SP, KS : cing TK

5. thim ZN, SP, TK : thims KS

6. mdog ZN, SP : mdogs KS : 'dog TK

7. rkyang shad ZN, SP : nyis shad KS, TK

1. gtan ZN, SP, KS : rtan TK

2. tshigs ZN, SP, TK : tshig KS

3. dman ZN, SP, KS : rman TK

4. kyis ZN, SP, TK : kyi KS

5. te ZN, SP, KS : ste TK

6. gtan ZN, SP, KS : rtan TK
7. tshigs ZN, SP, TK : tshig KS
8. gyis ZN, SP, TK : gyi KS
9. bya'o ZN, SP, KS : bya TK
10. cir ZN, SP, TK : ci KS
11. ci ZN, SP : cir KS, TK
12. gtan ZN, SP, KS : rtan TK
13. tshigs ZN, SP, TK : tshig KS
14. kyis ZN, SP, TK : gis KS
15. byang ZN, SP, KS : bya TK

1. *gtan tshigs*, Skr. *hetu*. See M. Monier-Williams 1986, p. 1303; cf. BGTC, vol. 1, p. 1036, *gtan tshigs*, (1).

2. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: that is to say, the Primordial Wisdom of Self-Awareness (*rang rig pa'i ye shes*) perceives the Condition (*ngang*) as clear, (i.e., as capable of appearing in all sorts of ways), and the Ultimate Nature (*rang bzhin*) as empty, without any duality between the two.

3. On *bdag nyid chen po* cf. S. G. Karmay 1988a, p. 114, n. 40.

5. rkyang shad ZN, SP : nyis shad KS, TK

1. 'byung ZN, SP, KS : byung TK

2. shing ZN, SP, KS : cing TK

3. thim ZN, SP, TK : thims KS

4. bzung ZN, SP, KS : bzu TK

1. kyang ZN, SP : dang KS, TK

2. ci ZN, SP, KS : cir TK

3. zhing ZN, SP : cing KS, TK

4. shing ZN, SP, KS : cing TK

5. brjod ZN, SP, KS : sbyor TK

6. rkyang shad ZN, SP : nyis shad KS, TK

7. te ZN, SP, KS : ste TK

8. rkyang shad ZN, SP : nyis shad KS, TK

9. rkyang shad ZN, SP : nyis shad KS, TK

1. mchon ZN, SP : mtshon KS, TK

2. las ZN, SP, KS : la TK

3. 'grib ZN, SP, KS : sgrib TK

4. mthon ZN, SP : mtho KS : mtho' TK

5. gyis ZN, SP, TK : gyi KS

1. TK has a kind of *yi mgo* at this point.

2. dpe ZN, SP : dper KS, TK

3. gyis ZN, SP, TK : gyi KS
4. las ZN, SP, KS : la TK
5. rje ZN, SP, TK : rjes KS
6. par ZN, SP, KS : pa TK
7. skus ZN, SP, TK : sku'i KS
8. la ZN, SP, KS, TK : las ego
9. bsgrub ZN, SP, KS : sgrub TK
10. tu ZN, SP : du KS, TK
1. bskyed ZN, SP, KS : skyed TK
2. skyed ZN, SP, TK : bskyed KS

3. bsrung ZN, SP, KS : srungs TK
4. bsrung ZN, SP : bsrungs KS : srung TK
5. srung ZN, SP, TK : bsrungs KS
6. ni ZN, SP : gis KS : gyi TK
7. 'thob ZN, SP : thob KS, TK
8. gya ZN, SP : bya KS, TK

1. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: *gsas mkhar = lha chen po*. The five most important *gSas mkhar* deities, called *Yi dam gsas mkhar mchog lnga*, are dBal gsas rNgam pa, lHa rgod Thog pa, gTso mchog mKha' 'gying (these three, being the deities associated with the *sPyi spungs tantric* cycle are also known as the *sPyi spungs lha*), dBal chen Ge khod (the main deity of the homonymous *tantric* cycle) and 'Brug gsas Chem pa (the main deity of the *Phur pa tantric* cycle). Cf. S. G. Karmay 1975a, pp. 196-202 and P. Kværne 1974, pp. 104-109; for iconographic descriptions see P. Kværne 1995, *passim*.

2. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: that is to say the adept has all deities perfected in him or herself, and doesn't need to go through the meditative stages of Generation (*bskyed rim*) and Perfection (*rdzogs rim*) as required in the *tantric* practices of the Seventh and Eighth Vehicles.

1. 'thob ZN, SP : thob KS, TK
2. rtsol ZN, SP, KS : rtso>l< (dbu chen) TK

3. chen incl. ZN, SP, KS : >chen< (dbu chen) TK

4. bu'i ZN, SP : bu yi KS : bu'i >a chung< (dbu chen) TK

5. brag ZN, SP, KS : brags TK

1. >gzhi la< (dbu chen) TK

2. TK has a kind of *yi mgo* at this point.

3. bri ba ZN, SP, KS : dri ma TK

4. pa ZN, SP, KS : rtsam TK

5. sgom ZN, SP, TK : bsgom KS

6. rkyang shad ZN, SP, TK : tsheg shad KS

1. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: *rin chen gser gling* or *rdo med gser gling*, an imaginary island where everything is entirely made of gold. Cf. mDo smad pa dGe 'dun Chos 'phel (1903-1951), *rGya gar gyi gnas chen khag la 'grod pa'i lam yig. Guide to Buddhist Sacred Places in India*, Maha Bodhi Society, Calcutta, 1939, pp. 29-30, where *gser gling* is the name for the Indonesian island of Sumatra (*sum tar*): (29) ...*sum tar la slebs / de ni gser gling ste bstan pa ni med* / (30) *gser gling gi shar lho phyogs su 'ja ba'am 'bru'i gling yod...//*.

1. pa'i ZN, SP, TK : pas KS

2. pa ZN, SP, KS : ba TK

3. seng ZN, SP, TK : sing KS

4. gyur ZN, SP, KS : 'gyur TK

5. bsgrub ZN, SP, KS : sgrub>s< (dbu chen) TK

6. pa incl. ZN, SP, KS : >pa< (dbu chen) TK

7. gyis ZN, SP, TK : gyi KS

8. rtsol ba ZN, SP, KS : 'bad rtsol TK

9. mong ZN, SP : mongs KS, TK

10. g.yogs ZN, SP, TK : g.yog KS

11. The whole verse is an addenda in dbu chen in TK.

12. rkyang shad ZN, SP : tsheg shad KS : nyis shad TK

1. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: a practitioner (*nyams len pa*) who abides in the state of the Great Perfection.

2. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: body, speech and mind.

3. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: at the moment of death.

4. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: those of body, speech and mind.

5. I.e. the state of the Great Perfection.

1. brjod ZN, SP, KS : rjod TK

2. rkyang shad ZN, SP : nyis shad KS, TK. The whole sentence is not a note and it is written in dbu chen in TK.

3. rkyang shad ZN, SP, TK : nyis shad KS. The sentence is not a note in TK.

4. theg pa dgu'i ZN, SP, KS : theg >dgu< (dbu chen) rnam kyī TK

5. tu ZN, SP : du KS, TK

6. ste ZN, SP, TK : yin KS

7. tu ZN, SP : du KS, TK

8. rdul ZN, SP, KS : bdul TK

9. gsung ZN, SP, KS : gsungs TK

10. gsung ZN, SP, KS : gsungs TK

11. mi incl. ZN, SP, KS : >mi< (dbu chen) TK

12. rkyang shad ZN, SP, TK : nyis shad KS

1. All the teachings of Bon. See D. Snellgrove 1967, p. 227 et seq. Cf. J. Hackin 1924, p. 31.

1. kyang ZN, SP, KS : yang TK

2. bshad ZN, SP, KS : gshad TK

3. rkyang shad ZN, SP, TK : nyis shad KS

4. de ZN, SP : ste KS, TK

5. gting ZN, SP, KS : rting TK

6. phra ZN, SP, KS : 'phra TK

7. par ZN, SP, KS : pa TK

8. rig ZN, SP, TK : rigs KS

9. par ZN, SP : pa KS, TK

10. bzhugs ZN, SP, KS : bzhug TK

11. te ZN, SP, KS : ste TK

12. rkyang shad ZN, SP, TK : nyis shad KS

13. tu ZN, SP : du KS, TK

1. Cf. the View which is like the Lion's Roar, p. 213.

1. tu ZN, SP : du KS, TK

2. gnyan ZN, SP, KS : snyan TK

3. gces ZN, SP, KS : ces TK

4. zungs ZN, SP : bzung KS, TK

5. brjed ZN, SP, KS : rjed TK

6. tu ZN, SP : du KS, TK

7. bas ZN, SP, KS : pa'i TK : ba'i ego

9. rkyang shad ZN, SP, TK : nyis shad KS

10. tu ZN, SP : du KS, TK

8. rkyang shad ZN, SP, TK : nyis shad KS

1. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: if someone tries to recover a jewel from the mouth of a crocodile, that would not only be extremely dangerous, but the jewel could be swallowed by the crocodile and be lost forever. Cf. R. A. Stein 1977.

1. gcam ZN, SP, TK : cam KS

2. g.yeng ZN, SP, KS : dbyeng TK

3. zhing ZN, SP : cing KS, TK

4. srung ZN, SP : bsrungs KS : srun TK

5. cing ZN, SP, TK : zhing KS

6. stegs ZN, SP : teg KS : rtegs TK

7. sgra ZN, SP, KS : smra TK

8. tshig ZN, SP, TK : tshigs KS

9. brjod ZN, SP, KS : rjod TK

10. rkyang shad ZN, SP, TK : nyis shad KS

1. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: who are such because they only speak about the *rDzogs pa chen po* but do not practise it.

2. *mu stegs*; cf. M. Ishikawa 1990, entry no. 293, p. 97. See also BGTC, vol. 2, p. 2102. In *rDzogs chen* textual sources the term *mu stegs pa* is specifically referred to those who follow the views of eternalism (*rtag pa'i lta ba*) and nihilism (*chad pa'i lta ba*). Cf. e.g. the *rDzogs pa chen po yang rtse klong chen gyi nges don*, op. cit., pp. 194,6-195,5, and the *Byang sems gab pa dgu bskor gyi dgongs pa bkrol ba'i 'grel bzhi rig pa'i rgya mtsho*, section 4, *lTa ba'i sgyang 'grel* in *Gal mdo*, TBMC, New Delhi, 1972, pp. 472,2-474,2. For this collection see S. G. Karmay 1977, p. 143.

3. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: *ru tra* = enemies of the doctrine; cf. the *Tibetan Zang Zung Dictionary*, op. cit., p. 8,7, where *ru tra* = *srin po*, a class of demons; see R. Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1956, *passim*. Note that crocodiles are *chu srin* in Tibetan. Cf. R. A. Stein 1985b. *Rudra* is also the archaic vedic name of Śiva. Is this to be regarded as a critique to the followers of this god? Cf. R. A. Stein 1973-1974; I. Nobumi 1985; K. Mimaki and A. Akamatsu 1985; D. Snellgrove 1987, *passim*; R. A. Stein 1995.

1. ldan ZN, SP, TK : >?< KS

2. mi 'gyur ZN, SP, KS : 'gyur med TK

3. brtan ZN, SP, KS : stan TK

4. rkyang shad ZN, SP : nyis shad KS, TK

5. ma incl. ZN, SP, KS : incl. but struck through TK

6. sang ZN : seng SP, TK : sangs KS

7. dad brtson ZN, SP : *** KS : rtson TK

8. tu ZN, SP : du KS, TK

9. bstan ZN, SP, TK : bsten KS

10. par inc. ZN, SP, KS : >par< (dbu chen) TK

11. zhes ZN, SP : *** KS : ces TK

12. gsungs ZN, SP, TK : gsung KS

13. so ZN, SP, TK : s.ho KS

14. rkyang shad ZN, SP : nyis shad KS, TK

15. sa ma ya ZN, SP : sā mā yā KS : swa mā yā TK

16. rkyang shad ZN, SP : nyis shad KS, TK

1. sogz ZN, SP, TK : swogs KS

2. rkyang shad ZN, SP, TK : tsheg shad KS

3. zhes ZN, SP, KS : zhes >ngag< (dbu chen) kyis TK

4. mgrin ZN, SP, KS : 'grin TK

5. tu ZN, SP : du KS, TK

6. bstod ZN, SP, KS : stod TK

7. pa ZN, SP, KS : pas TK

8. tu ZN, SP : du KS, TK

9. ... ZN, SP : rkyang shad KS, TK

10. gi ZN, SP, KS : gyi TK

11. rkyang shad ZN, SP, TK : nyis shad KS

1. ... ZN, SP : rkyang shad KS, TK
2. rkyang shad ZN, SP : nyis shad KS
3. brgyad ZN, SP, KS : rgya TK
4. gi ZN, SP, TK : gis KS
5. cu'i ZN, SP : bcu'i KS, TK
6. kyi incl. ZN, SP, KS : om. TK
7. 'ongs ZN, SP : 'ong KS : byon TK
8. pa'i ZN, SP, TK : ba'i KS
9. rab ZN, SP, KS : rabs TK
10. pa'i ZN, SP, TK : ba'i KS
11. lta'i ZN, SP, KS : ltar kyi TK

12. gshen ZN, SP, TK : *** KS

13. rab ZN, SP, KS : rabs TK

14. kyi ZN, SP, TK : kyis KS

1. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: all the teachings of Bon.

2. A description of the three hundred and sixty *gSas mkhar* deities is found in the *gSas mkhar rin po che spyi spungs gsang ba bsen thub*, one of the three basic *tantras* of the *sPyi spungs* cycle discovered by Gyer mi Nyi 'od in 1108 (see S. G. Karmay 1977, p. 10), T. Namdak, TBMC, New Delhi, 1972, pp. 233-391; BKSr, vol. 112, chapter eight, p. 44b6 et seq.

1. ba'i ZN, SP, KS : pa'i TK

2. ba'i ZN, SP, KS : pa'i TK

3. ... ZN, SP, KS : rkyang shad TK

4. rkyang shad ZN, SP : nyis shad KS : ... TK

5. mgrin ZN, SP, KS : 'drin TK

6. tu ZN, SP : du KS, TK

7. rkyang shad ZN, SP, TK : nyis shad KS

8. tu ZN, SP : du KS, TK

9. tu ZN, SP : du KS, TK

10. te ZN, SP, KS : ste TK

11. so ZN, SP : s.ho KS : swo TK

12. rkyang shad ZN, SP, TK : nyis shad KS

1. las ZN, SP : la KS, TK

2. sogz ZN, SP, TK : swogs KS

3. te ZN, SP, KS : ste TK

4. kyang ZN, SP, KS : dang TK

5. te ZN, SP, KS : ste TK

6. gi ZN, SP, TK : gis KS

7. nas ZN, SP, KS : te TK

8. tu ZN, SP : du KS : 'du TK

9. to ZN, SP : ro KS, TK

10. las ZN, SP, KS : la TK

11. gi ZN, SP, TK : gis KS

12. bstan ZN, SP : bsten KS : stan TK

13. so ZN, SP, KS : s.ho TK

14. rkyang shad ZN, SP : nyis shad KS, TK

1. thugs kyi bcud ZN, SP : man ngag KS : thugs >kyi< (dbu chen) bcud TK

2. kyi ZN, SP : kyis KS, TK

3. man ngag dril ZN, SP, KS : man ngag gi bcud dril TK

4. sku yis ZN, SP, TK : sku'i KS

5. bstan ZN, SP, TK : bsten KS

6. so ZN, SP, KS : swo TK

7. rkyang shad ZN, SP, TK : nyis shad KS

1. I.e. the lineage starting from the Primordial Teacher Kun tu bZang po and ending with gSang ba 'Dus pa. See section Ka of the *rDzogs pa chen po zhang zhung snyan rgyud kyi brgyud pa'i bla ma rnam thar*, op. cit., pp. 5,4-13,4.

2. The uninterrupted lineage of twenty-four human beings who transmitted the teaching of the *rDzogs pa chen po* in Zhang Zhung. See section Ka of the *rDzogs pa chen po zhang zhung snyan rgyud kyi brgyud pa'i bla ma rnam thar*, op. cit., pp. 21,2- 26,1.

3. This term is traditionally associated with a category of officiating 'priests', some of whom played an influential role as spiritual protectors of the king (*sku gshen*) during the period of the ancient Tibetan monarchy. Cf. P. Kværne 1995, p. 25.

1. dang incl. KS : kyang incl. TK : om ZN, SP

2. gzha' ZN, SP, KS : bzha' TK

3. ltar ZN, SP, TK : bzhin du KS

4. so ZN, SP, KS : s.ho TK

5. rkyang shad ZN, SP, TK : nyis shad KS

6. kyang incl. TK : om. ZN, SP, KS

7. >nam< (dbu chen) TK : om. ZN, SP, KS

8. rkyang shad ZN, SP : nyis shad KS, TK

9. After grol lo, the concluding words of the four versions examined are as follows:

1. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: Ta pi Hri tsa; cf. Introduction, p. 49, n. 137.

2. Gyer spungs sNang bzher sLod po. See Introduction, pp. 28-29.

3. Cf. n. 9 to the critical edition, p. 160. KS: "Then, through rows of consecutive transmission, (this teaching) has remained victorious up to my present time. Not knowing (the state of) Awareness, may the good virtues (derived from) writing (about it) and clearly remembering (it) increase. Merits are dedicated to (all) beings. May the two benefits [for oneself and others] be perfectly achieved in complete happiness!"

TK: "Promise. May the welfare of living beings expand! May fortune increase! Whatever meritorious cause may exist in having written this, (I) dedicate to the benefit of all sentient beings, (who are) infinite (as) the sky, and have been kind (to me like) my gracious parents. May perfect Enlightenment be attained! Fortune! *Ho! Ho!*" (Sound of a powerful laugh).

1. The text is indexed as K 111,9 = 2 (*Señ-ge sgra-sgrags lta-ba'i lun*) in P. Kværne 1974, p. 112, and as no. 40 in S. G. Karmay 1977, pp. 101. My thanks to E. Gene Smith for having offered me the relevant volume (and quite a few others) as a gift.

2. See n. 2 in Note to the critical edition of the *rGyud bu chung bcu gnyis*, p. 73. I am grateful to the library of the TBMC and to P. Kværne for having provided me with the relevant volume.

3. The versions of the texts here used for collation contained in the first and second reprint of the Canon (*mDzod sde* section, vol. 3/Nga and vol. 109 respectively), bear exactly the same folio and page numbering of the *g.Yung drung bon gyi bka'dang bka'*

rtan (vol. 2, ff. 1-10, pp. 373-391). No contextual differences have been remarked between the three versions. My thanks to S. Meinheit of the Library of Congress for the reproduction of the text of the first reprint, and to the library of the Shang Shung Institute, Italy, for that of the second.

1. I am grateful to U. Pagel for having provided me with the relevant microfilm and photostatic copy.

1. Cf. Y. Nagano 1995, pp. 133-141.

3. *du* GK : *tu* KG, TL

6. *'di* GK, KG : *'di'* TL

7. *mongs* GK : *mong* KG, TL

2. *s.ho* GK : *om.* KG

1. *seng ge sgra sgrags lta ba'i lung bzhugs s.ho*

4. *rkyang shad* GK, KG : *nyis shad* TL

5. *lung incl.* GK, KG : *om.* TL

8. *men* GK, KG, TL. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: *men* is the old form for *ma yin*. Cf. E. Haarh 1968, p. 24: "The negative copula is *ma-min*, *min* or *men*." See also A. Wayman 1988.

1. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: The term *gShen* implies the meaning of *g.yo ba med pa*, immovable, and *'gag pa med pa*, unobstructed.

1. ges GK, KG : ge'i TL

2. bsgrags GK, KG : sgrags TL

3. >?< GK : thams cad KG, TL

4. See note 2 to the translation, p. 171.

5. 'di GK, KG : 'di' TL

6. bsgrags GK, KG : sgrags TL

7. 'di GK, KG : 'di' TL

8. bstan GK, KG : stan TL

9. The last two verses are treated as a single sentence in TL.

1. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: *sder chags* refers here to animals with claws, like tigers, leopards, birds, dogs and cats, as well as to all other carnivores and animals of prey (*gcan gzan*).

2. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: they feel lost because they know that in terms of ferociousness and ability in catching a prey, the lion surpasses them all; *bra* is an old term for *sems stor ba*; cf. BGTC, vol. 2, p. 1897.

3. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: *dngos po* is here intended as the outer sphere (*phyi'i yul*), i.e. the external appearances which sentient beings perceive as endowed with inherent nature.

4. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma interprets *lung chen* as *lung rtsa ba chien po*, very fundamental precepts.

1. TL has no key-letters as section headings.

2. ste GK, TL : te KG

3. pa GK : ba KG, TL

4. de na GK, KG : des na TL

5. bstan GK, KG : stan TL

6. ste GK, TL : te KG

7. btags GK, KG : rtags TL

1. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: that is to say the way in which the Primordial Wisdom of Self-Awareness (*rang rig pa'i ye shes*) perceives the Basis of all.

2. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: that the Ultimate Nature is unaltered.
3. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: the perception by the Primordial Wisdom of Self-Awareness.
4. Cf. H. A. Jäschke 1993, p. 128, and BGTC, vol. 1, p. 655, *nges pa*, (1).
5. *ji ltar btags pas de ltar snang*. Cf. a very similar expression found in the *lTa ba'i rim pa bshad pa* attributed to sKa ba dPal brtsegs (late eighth/early ninth centuries): *mnyam nyid rang bzhin ma nges pas / ji ltar bltas pa der snang phyir / (bsTan 'gyur* Derge edition, vol. Co (204), fol. 237b1). See also D. S. Ruegg 1981, p. 209; cf. S. G. Karmay 1988a, p. 149, n. 62.

1. ci GK, KG : cir TL
2. bsam GK, KG : sams TL
3. bsgrub GK : bsgrubs KG : sgrub TL
4. cing GK, TL : shing KG
5. ji GK, KG : ci TL
6. de yi GK, KG : de'i TL

7. gzhi GK, KG : bzhi TL

8. pa'i GK : ba'i KG, TL

9. rkyang shad GK, KG : nyis shad TL

10. pa'i GK, KG : pa TL

11. btsal GK, KG : rtsal TL

1. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: this is a reference to the eight lower Vehicles and to the principles that inspire them.

2. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: as to the fact that there exist different ways of viewing or defining the Nature.

3. The Basis of all; see following passage.

4. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: there is no duality between the Basis of all and all phenomena.

5. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: *lhun gyis grub pa* = '*byung rung ma 'gag pa*, capable of arising without obstruction.

1. pa GK ba KG, TL

2. bas GK, KG : pas TL

3. >nga ... yin< (dbu chen) GK : incl. KG, TL

4. nga yi GK, KG : nga'i TL

5. rkyang shad GK : om. KG, TL

1. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: *Kun tu bZang po* of the Basis (*gzhi'i kun tu bzang po*), the inexpressible *Kun tu bZang po* (*gdags su med pa'i kun tu bzang po*), the Self-Originated Primordial Wisdom of the Basis (*gzhi'i rang 'byung ye shes*).

2. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: the three existences of subterranean beings (*klu*) below the earth (*sa 'og*), of humans (*mi*) on the surface (*sa steng*), and of gods (*lha*) above the earth (*sa bla*).

1. ka GK, KG : rka TL

2. TL has: gdod nas rka [sic] dag rang bzhin pas.

3. kho GK, KG : kha TL

4. gzhung GK, KG : bzhung TL

5. 'di GK, KG : 'di' TL

6. blta GK, KG : lta TL

7. ru GK, TL : rgyu KG

8. bsgrags GK, KG : sgrags TL

9. rkyang shad GK, TL : nyis shad KG

1. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma always intends *lta ru med pa* as *lta rgyu med pa*, whenever the expression occurs in both the *lTa ba seng ge sgra bsgrags* and the *rGyud bu chung bcu gnyis*. In this case, the reading of KG supports his interpretation; see relevant n. 7 in the critical edition, p. 178.

2. See below, p. 199, n. 1.

2. 'di GK, KG : 'di' TL

3. bstan GK, KG : stan TL

4. pa GK : ba KG, TL

5. pa GK : ba KG, TL

6. kyi GK, KG : gyi TL

1. tsheg shad GK : ' ' KG : ga ego

1. 'dun GK, KG 'thun TL

2. 'di GK, KG : 'di' TL

3. kho GK, KG : kha TL

4. 'di GK, KG : 'di' TL

⁵ kho GK, KG : kha TL

6. 'di' TL : 'di ego

7. kha TL : kho ego

8. The whole verse is omitted in GK and KG.

9. 'di GK, KG : 'di' TL

10. dgag GK, KG : 'gag TL

11. 'di GK, KG : 'di' TL

12. kho GK, KG : kha TL

13. kho GK, KG : kha TL

14. brtags GK, KG : rtags TL

15. rtags na rep. TL

16. yongs GK, KG : yong TL

17. kyi GK, KG : kyis TL

1. yangs GK : yongs KG : 'ong TL

2. gang GK, KG : ga TL

3. gcig GK, KG : cig TL

4. gcig GK, KG : cig TL

5. gcig GK, KG : cig TL

6. du GK : tu KG, TL

7. dka' GK, KG : rka TL

8. dka' GK, KG : rka TL

9. blta'o GK, KG : lta'o TL

10. rkyang shad GK, KG : nyis shad TL

1. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: appearance.

2. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: emptiness.

3. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: all phenomena of transmigration and the state transcending suffering.

4. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: past, present and future.

5. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: the Dimension of the Self-Originated Primordial Wisdom of the Basis. Cf. Introduction, p. 59 et seq.

6. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: the Way of Being of the Basis.

1. pa'i GK, KG : ba'i TL

2. bstan GK, KG : stan TL

3. bzlog GK, KG : zlog TL

4. TL has yod corrected into med. Cf. note 1 to the translation, p. 187.

5. bstan GK, KG : stan TL

6. kyi GK, KG : gyi TL

7. phyir GK, KG : sbyar TL

8. bstan GK, KG : stan TL

9. bzlog GK, KG : zlog TL

10. de GK, KG : ste TL

11. bstan GK, KG : stan TL

1. According to dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma, the term *thams cad* is here specifically referred to the Basis (*gzhi*), its dynamic potential (*rtsal*) and manifestation (*rol pa*).

2. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: when the two views of existence and non-existence are overcome.

1. thams incl. GK, TL : >thams< KG

2. gzung GK, KG : bzung TL

3. gzhung GK, KG : bzhung TL

4. bsgrub GK, KG : grub TL

5. gzhung GK, KG : bzhung TL

6. khyegs GK, TL : khegs KG

7. gdon GK, KG : bdon TL

1. bstan GK, KG : stan TL

2. brda GK, KG : bda' TL

3. kyis GK, KG : gyis TL

4. bstan GK, KG : stan TL

5. kyi GK, KG : gyi TL

6. brda GK, KG : bda' TL

7. gcig GK, KG : cig TL

8. ? GK : sems can KG, TL

9. kyang GK, KG : dang TL

10. rtsogs GK : sogs KG : bsogs TL

11. brda'i GK, KG : bda' yis TL : brda yis ego

1. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: the symbol is the Awareness of the individual about the Ultimate Nature of all phenomena.

1. med pa la GK, KG : nges par bcad TL

2. cing GK, TL : shing KG

3. dbyib GK : dbyibs KG, TL

4. ru GK, KG : rgyu TL

5. The whole verse is omitted in GK and KG.

6. du GK : tu KG, TL

1. gzhi GK, KG : zhi TL

2. gzugs GK, KG : bzugs TL

3. de GK, KG : ste TL

4. bltar GK, KG : ltar TL

1. de GK, KG : ste TL

2. par GK, KG : bar TL

3. The whole verse is omitted in TL.

4. 'di GK, KG : 'di' TL

5. du GK : tu KG, TL

6. kyi GK : kyis KG, TL

7. btsal GK, KG : rtsal TL

8. pa GK : ba KG, TL

7. yang GK, TL : kyang KG

8. thabs GK, KG : thab TL

9. bstan GK, KG : stan TL

10. bstan GK, KG : stan TL

11. brlag GK, KG : rlag TL

12. kas GK, KG : ka TL

13. bstan GK, KG : stan TL

1. mtha' GK, KG : mtha TL
2. dngos GK, KG : mngos TL
3. po GK, KG : por TL
4. bsgom GK, KG : sgom TL
5. yo GK, KG : yod TL
6. kho GK, KG : kha TL

1. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: Given that everything finds itself in the condition of Primordial Enlightenment, there is no reason for trying to accomplish the benefit of beings; on the contrary, by abiding in that state, the benefit of beings will actually be achieved.

1. mig GK, KG : dmig TL
2. dman GK, KG : rman TL
1. bstan GK, KG : stan TL

2. pas GK : bas KG, TL

3. blo yi GK, KG : glo'i TL

4. rnam GK, KG : gnam TL

5. blo GK, KG : glo TL

6. gyi GK, KG : khyi TL

7. mig GK, KG : dmig TL

8. la GK, KG : yang TL

9. ye nas rep. GK

10. mnyam GK, KG : gnyam TL

11. blo GK, KG : glo TL

12. mnyam GK, KG : gnyam TL

13. rkyang shad GK, KG : nyis shad TL

1. According to dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma, the metaphor refers to the View of *Kuntu bZang po*, which is undifferentiated, as is the sight of good and thoroughbred horses. For *gyi ling*, see B. Laufer 1916, p. 508; dGe bshes Chos kyi Grags pa's *brDa dang ming tshig gsal ba*, Mi rigs dPe skrun khang, Beijing, 1981, p. 125, where *gyi ling* = *rta mchog*, and reference is made to the good horses of Amdo, of which twelve different breeds are said to exist; cf. *A mdo'i kha skad tshig mdzod*, edited by Hwa Khan and Klu 'bum rGyal, Kan su'u Mi rigs dPe skrun khang, Lanzhou, 1993, p. 92 and BGTC, vol. 1, p. 382.

1. mnyam GK, KG : gnyam TL

2. kyi GK, KG : gyi TL

3. bskyod GK, KG : skyod TL

4. zhog GK, KG : bzhag TL

5. gzhan GK, KG : bzhhan TL

6. dang GK, KG : kyang TL

7. pa GK, KG, TL : ba ego

8. gi GK, KG : gis ego.

9. ngang gi zhi GK, KG : rang bzhin zhi TL

10. gzhan GK, KG : bzhan TL

11. kyang GK, KG : yang TL

1. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: that is to say, let your mind be empty and clear as the sky.

1. kho GK, KG : kha TL

2. nar GK, KG : na TL.

3. bde GK, KG : bde' TL

4. blo GK, KG : klo TL

5. brtags GK, KG : btags TL

1. shi GK, KG : 'chi TL

2. de GK, KG : ste TL

3. The whole verse is omitted in TL.

4. brtag pa GK : rtag pa KG, TL

5. sems can and >sems nyid< GK : sems nyid KG : sems can TL

2. por GK, KG : po TL

3. thul GK, KG : btul TL

4. dgon GK, KG : sgon TL

5. ring GK, KG : rings TL

6. bsdad GK, KG : 'dug TL

7. 'khrug GK, KG : 'khrul TL

8. bzlog GK, KG : zlog TL

9. g.yo GK, KG : 'gyur TL

1. yis GK : yi KG, TL

1. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: the eighty-four thousand kinds of afflictions, which are counteracted by the eighty-four thousand teachings of Bon. Cf. The Twelve Little Tantras, p. 141, n. 1.

1. 'dra // dper na yid bzhin nor bu incl. GK, TL : >'dra // dper na yid bzhin nor bu< (dbu chen) KG

2. thongs GK, KG, TL : gtong ego

3. pa GK, KG, TL : ba ego

4. yi GK, KG : de'i TL

5. 'ga' GK, KG : 'ga TL

6. la GK, KG : las TL

7. yod GK, KG : 'ong TL

8. la GK, KG : yang TL

9. rkyang shad GK, KG : nyis shad TL

1. The Everlasting State is difficult to perceive as much as the Wish-fulfilling Gem is difficult to obtain.

1. u GK, KG : ud TL

2. yang GK, TL : kyang KG

3. grang GK, KG : drang TL

4. la GK, KG : las TL

6. 'khrungs GK, KG : 'khrung TL

7. 'khrungs GK, KG : 'khrung TL

8. pa GK, KG : ba TL

9. dka' GK, KG : rka TL

10. 'di GK, KG : 'di' TL

11. dka' GK, KG : rka TL

12. 'khrungs GK, KG : 'khrul TL

13. dka' GK, KG : rka TL

5. phyung GK, KG : byung TL

1. *gser gyi grang ma*; cf. BGTC. vol. 1, p. 393, *grang gser*: "Phye mar btul ba'i gser 'byug dus me la brten mi dgos pa zhig."

2. *sbugs*; cf. BGTC, vol. 2, p. 2018, *sbugs ma*.

3. Skr. *Trāyastriṃśā*, the heaven situated at the top of Mount Meru in the sphere of desire (*'dod kham*s), inhabited by the thirty-three gods; see the MVy, Sasaki, Tokyo, 1916-1926, entry no. 3079, and also He Wenxuan and Hou Cunqi, *Bod rgya shan sbyar gyi shes bya'i rnam grangs kun btus tshig mdzod*, mTsho sngon Mi rigs dPe skrun khang, Xining, 1987, pp. 786-787. Cf. P. Kværne 1990b, p. 208.

1. bzhug GK : gzhug KG, TL
2. kyi GK : kyis KG, TL
3. ste GK : te KG, TL
4. pa GK, TL : pas KG
5. 'ja' GK, KG : gzha TL
6. 'ded GK, KG : ded TL
7. smig GK, KG : smigs TL
9. bde GK, KG : der TL

8. nye GK, KG : nyid TL

1. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: *gza' gtad med pa = dmigs su med pa*.

2. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: by remaining in the state of contemplation (*dgongs pa*), the Ultimate Nature of the individual spontaneously appears in the external space in the form of spheres (*thig le*). These spheres are absolutely not created through the mind's imagination. Visions of such kind can be experienced by consummate meditators in daytime and at night as well, since they do not depend on secondary sources such as sunlight etc. That is why it is said that the *thig le* is unconstrued and that it can only appear by remaining in the state of contemplation.

3. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: the mistaken views of the lower eight Vehicles.

4. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: the views of heretics.

5. dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma: mistaken views applied to the teachings of the Great Perfection. These consist in the inclusion of the views of the eight lower Vehicles into the View of Great Perfection; wrong interpretations of the instructions; and mistaken

views that can be naturally overcome. Cf. the '*Od gsal rdzogs pa chen po'i lam gyi rim pa'i khrid yid kun tu bzang po'i snying tig* by Shar rdza bKra' shis rGyal mtshan, in T. Namdak 1993, Tibetan Text, p. 21,1 et seq.

1. nyid GK, KG : ni TL

2. cir GK, KG : jir TL

3. pa GK : ba KG, TL

4. ji GK, KG : ci TL

5. pa GK : ba KG, TL

6. dpe GK, KG : dpes TL

7. bstan GK, KG : stan TL

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[Academy of Science and Letters, where I worked from August 1995 to June
1996 on the cataloguing of t](#)

[My respect and warm gratitude are also extended to Ponlop Trinley Nyima
\(dPon slob 'Phrin las Nyi ma](#)

[During our working meetings in Dolanji in 1994, he not only generously offered
his knowledgeable com](#)

[The objective of this work is to offer a descriptive analysis of the philosophical
view \(Ita ha\) of](#)

Followers of the Bon religion maintain that its tenets were first expounded as the 'Everlasting Bon' (stop pa) gShen rab Mi bo che, who is considered to have made his appearance on earth much earlier than he was and was born in and ruled a country to the West of Tibet known as sTag gzig (or rTag gzigs).;

After sTon pa gShen rab entrusted his teachings to worthy successors, the Everlasting Bon is believed.

The kingdom of Zhang Zhung played an influential role in the history and culture of Tibet. With Mo it seems to have covered a vast area to the west and possibly north-east of Tibet.' It was divided into three provinces (sgo plug bargsum) where different languages were spoken; one of these, smar (or smrar),^o was the language from which numerous texts, including those of the Great Perfection, are said to have come.

Bon enjoyed royal patronage in Tibet until the second half of the eighth century A.D., when Buddhism came to dominate.

The period following the disintegration of the Tibetan empire (which occurred during the first half of the eighth century) was a time of great change for Bonpos, on their part, did not remain indifferent to that state of affairs, and adapting to the times.

This process of adaptation and systematization could not have possibly taken place without interaction with the Buddhist tradition.

This image influenced the approach of Western scholarship toward the study of this religion, which has been largely negative.

There are unquestionably quite a few aspects of the Bon religion, as it appears today, which do not have their origin in the Buddhist tradition.

In our opinion, it is precisely the value of such concepts and sources that makes Bon not only a fascinating but also a valuable part of the Tibetan heritage.

Nowadays several thousand Tibetans profess the Bon religion. Bonpos are found in various districts of Tibet.

For the Bonpos the teachings of the Great Perfection are the epitome of all the beliefs classified as Bon.

The same applies to the rNying ma pas, the followers of the Old School of Tibetan Buddhism,²⁰ although they have also been practised by representatives of other Tibetan Buddhist traditions.²¹

A study of the history and doctrines of the Great Perfection is therefore

significant not only in it

The historical origins of the Great Perfection cannot be fixed with absolute certainty. Its tenets s